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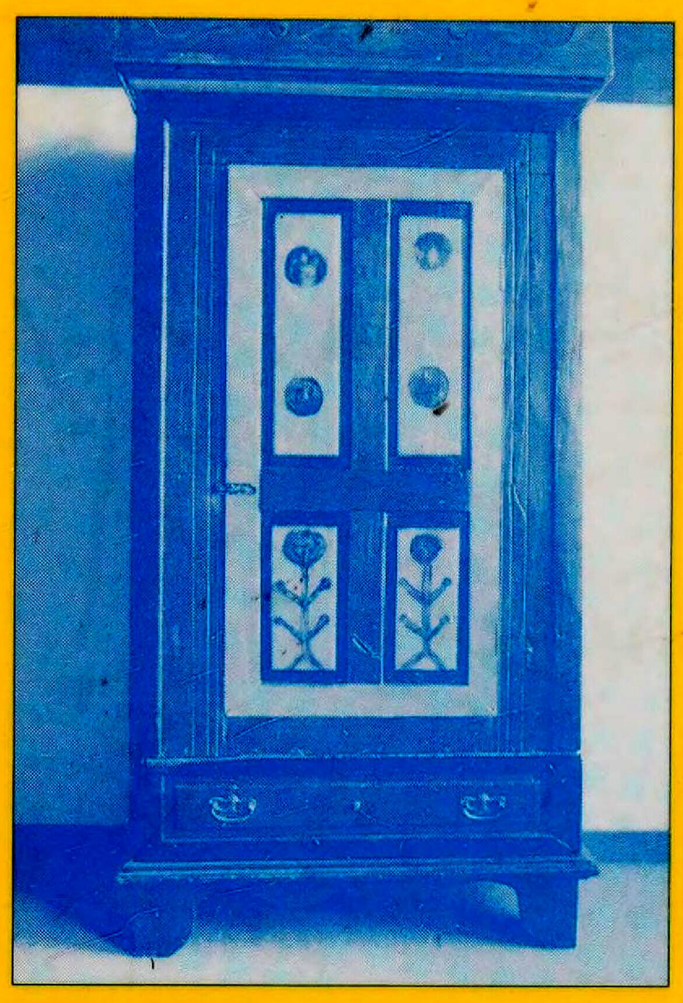

The Ukrainians in Canada, 1891–1991

Les Ukrainiens au Canada, 1891–1991

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Introduction

This publication is the first issue of *Material History Bulletin* to focus exclusively on the material culture of a single minority ethnic group in Canada. Its purpose as a "theme issue" is to salute the centenary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada in 1991 and simultaneously to help delineate the parameters of one of the country's richest sources of material folk culture.

Quite predictably, the assembly of contributions that follows shows a distinct regional bias that favours the Prairies, where large block settlements of pioneering Ukrainian immigrants took root some decades ago. A second emphasis underscores the religious aspects of Ukrainian material folk culture—a tendency that, to some extent, represents the lingering aftermath of worldwide celebrations in 1988 marking the millennium of Ukrainian Christianity and a concomitant rediscovery of the impact of religion and religious institutions on all facets of Ukrainian life and letters both here and abroad.

We hope that the above has been tempered by the variety of perspectives offered by our contributors who range from museum curators to antique dealers and one nun. The threat of excessive filiopietistic ethnocentricism has been averted to some extent by the fact that almost half the contributors claim non-Ukrainian descent. In my capacity as compiler for this issue, I wish to thank them all for tolerating the ruthless cuts necessitated by space and budgetary limitations. Finally, I wish to note the editorial support and collaborations provided by the indispensible talents of the Publishing Division of the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Robert B. Klymasz
Guest Editor

C'est la première fois que le *Bulletin d'histoire matérielle* consacre un numéro entier à la culture matérielle d'un groupe ethnique minoritaire au Canada. Souligner le centenaire de l'établissement des Ukrainiens au Canada, qui sera célébré en 1991, voilà l'objectif de ce «numéro thématique», qui cherche aussi à définir les paramètres d'une culture matérielle populaire parmi les plus riches au pays.

Comme il était à prévoir, les articles publiés dans ce bulletin portent essentiellement sur les Prairies, où d'importants groupes d'immigrants ukrainiens se sont établis il y a plusieurs décennies. Par ailleurs, les articles mettent en évidence la dimension religieuse de la culture matérielle populaire des Ukrainiens, faisant ainsi écho aux célébrations qui, en 1988, ont marqué le millénaire du christianisme ukrainien dans le monde entier. À cette occasion, l'on a redécouvert l'influence de la religion et des institutions religieuses dans tous les domaines de la vie et de la littérature ukrainiennes, ici comme à l'étranger.

Tout compte fait, nous espérons que nos lecteurs seront ravis par les différentes perspectives proposées par nos collaborateurs, parmi lesquels on compte des conservateurs de musée, des antiquaires et une religieuse. Nos collaborateurs, dont près de la moitié ne sont pas de descendance ukrainienne, ont su éviter le piège de la piété filiale à outrance et de l'ethnocentrisme. En ma qualité de rédacteur de ce numéro, je tiens à les remercier d'avoir accepté les impitoyables coupures imposées par le manque d'espace et les contraintes budgétaires. Enfin, je me dois de souligner le précieux appui et la collaboration merveilleuse de la Division des publications du Musée canadien des civilisations.

Robert B. Klymasz
Rédacteur invité

The Ukrainian Sacred Landscape: A Metaphor of Survival and Acculturation

JOHN C. LEHR

Résumé

Des données recueillies au Manitoba et ailleurs dans les Prairies démontrent que le paysage sacré des Ukrainiens, composé d'églises et de stèles funéraires, est une métaphore du changement culturel et un indice de la nature et de la rapidité de l'acculturation.

Abstract

Data from Manitoba and elsewhere on the Prairies show that the Ukrainian sacred landscape, composed of churches and cemetery markers, constitutes a metaphor for cultural change and an index to the nature and rate of acculturation.

> Literally nothing on earth is secure from man's incorrigibly metaphorizing disposition, propensity to invest every feature of his environment with both a meaning and a morality.
>
> —Gilbert Adair

Landscapes of the Canadian West derive their diversity from cultural impress rather than topographic variation. Each group of settlers entering the agricultural lands of western Canada hauled with them an immense cultural baggage of ideas, values, attitudes and expectations, which were quickly manifested in the built environment whenever homesteads were cut into the prairie sod or hacked out of the northern margins of the bush country.

One of the most distinctive landscapes to emerge in the West was that created by Ukrainian immigrants from the Austrian provinces of Galicia and Bukovyna. Between 1892 and 1914, these settlers pioneered large tracts of land in the northern parklands and along the southern fringes of the boreal forest. The appearance of their settlements soon attracted attention and drew comment from curious Anglo-Canadians, who saw their landscapes as alien, exotic, even a little romantic. The accounts of these frontier observers were generally descriptive, but often superficial and inaccurate, and focused only on the most obvious elements of the cultural milieu.[1]

Only in the last twenty years have scholars from a variety of disciplines analysed the Ukrainian rural landscape in Canada. Most such studies have been detailed examinations of one component of the cultural landscape—most commonly, the folk house or farmstead, less commonly, the church.[2] The wider landscape has not yet been interpreted in a holistic fashion.[3] It may be premature to attempt a holistic examination at this stage of understanding, and the scope of such a task is well beyond the bounds of this paper, which attempts to offer an approach toward the interpretation of the cultural landscape. This approach uses the Ukrainian sacred landscape as a metaphor for assimilation, change and acculturation within Ukrainian communities in the Canadian West.

Cultural Transfer and Pioneer Settlement

It is always tempting to predicate studies of the development of immigrant cultures in the New World on the assumption that immigrants left a fixed, long-established cultural tradition in the Old World to enter the cultural maelstrom of the New World. Hence, cultural change is seen as a phenomenon engendered by the shift of locales. Like most simple and convenient assumptions, it is false. Western Ukraine of the latter part of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was a society in transition. By the 1880s even remote areas of western Ukraine had been drawn into the orbit of the industrialized world.[4] Railways tied the principal market centres to the outside world; ideas and mass-produced goods percolated into the

most isolated of villages, which in turn fed the industrial heartland with agricultural goods. Village life was changing, as the outflow of dissatisfied emigrants testified.[5] The rural landscape of western Ukraine was not the same as it had been a hundred years previously: church styles were evolving, as were the farms and houses of the peasantry.[6]

For those who left and came to settle on the agricultural frontier of western Canada, the pace of change certainly accelerated. New pressures pushed from different directions; old pressures exerted by the German, Russian and Polish cultures were replaced by the more intensive and pervasive pressure of Anglo-Canadian—or Anglo-American—culture. In some respects, the act of emigration and shift of locales led to economically engendered cultural retrenchment, as when Ukrainian settlers reverted to simple dug-out dwellings used by the Carpathian highland shepherds or when they used the chimneyless "black house" (*chorna khata*) in the first years of settlement.[7]

For the most part, immigrants re-created a domestic landscape patterned on that of their homeland simply because it did not occur to them to do otherwise. They built in the way to which they were accustomed; it was a practical response to creating a new milieu. Space was organized to fit established patterns of use; hence, house form, barn design and farm layout remained in the traditional form.[8] Pioneers adapted easily to the incorporation of new materials, making any necessary modifications to design and form—they did not see the domestic landscape as imbued with the deeper meanings of ethnic identity. Aesthetic values were expressed in building forms and decoration, but were generally subservient to the more immediate concerns of securing economic well-being.[9] To the Ukrainian pioneer forging a new life in the West, a house was merely shelter. If it had meaning, it was not as a symbol of ethnic affiliation so much as a statement of economic status. Status was measured by the degree of integration achieved with the Anglo-Canadian economic system. Houses built on traditional patterns fell prey to attempts to slough off vestiges of poverty, and the desire to be seen as "modern" and, of course, as a progressive and economically successful farmer. These attitudes resulted in the rapid disappearance of traditional-style houses, barns and farm layouts from the more prosperous Ukrainian agricultural districts. In the marginal agricultural areas change was present, but slower.

In contrast to the fading Ukrainian presence in the domestic landscape, the sacred landscapes of Ukrainian settlement remain strongly entrenched in the landscape. Churches, bell towers, memorial crosses and gravestones constitute a highly visible element of the ethnic landscape. Furthermore, because of its symbolic significance, the sacred landscape, superficially at least, has the appearance of being an unchanging landscape, one which will long outlast its more ephemeral domestic counterpart.

The most obvious difference in these two landscapes lies in function. The sacred landscape was, and is, an expression of religious affiliation. It is shaped by the expression of spiritual beliefs, accommodation of the liturgy and the demands of ritual. For the Ukrainians in western Canada, there was a fourth and vital function: national identity.

After the decline of Kievan Rus' in the fourteenth century, the Ukrainians fell under a variety of foreign administrations: Polish, Lithuanian, Russian, Romanian and Austrian.[10] Ukraine then existed only as a geographical concept. Its people were fragmented and lacked any clear national identity.[11] In western Ukraine, the region which provided virtually all Ukrainian immigrants to Canada in the agricultural pioneer era, the population was under Austrian control. In Galicia, the Austrian government left much administration in the hands of the Poles who had formerly controlled the region. Similarly, in Bukovyna, Romanian influence continued to prevail.

Under Polish influence, an attempt was made to Catholicize the Orthodox Ukrainian population of Galicia. As a first step, a new church—the Greek Catholic or Uniate church—was established, retaining the Slavonic liturgy and the tradition of a married priesthood, but acknowledging the Pope as its spiritual head. It did not fulfil its intended aim of easing the transition to Roman Catholicism. Instead, in Galicia, it became a symbol of Ukrainian ethnic identity, adopting the role maintained by the Greek (or Russian) Orthodox church in Bukovyna. Hence, to the Ukrainian peasant, whether Uniate or Orthodox, the church was a powerful symbol. Apart from its spiritual meaning, the church came to represent ethnic identity; religion was given by social inheritance and became associated with a cluster of culture.[12] To the Ukrainians of Galicia and Bukovyna, the church (Uniate and Orthodox churches respectively) was the bearer of national

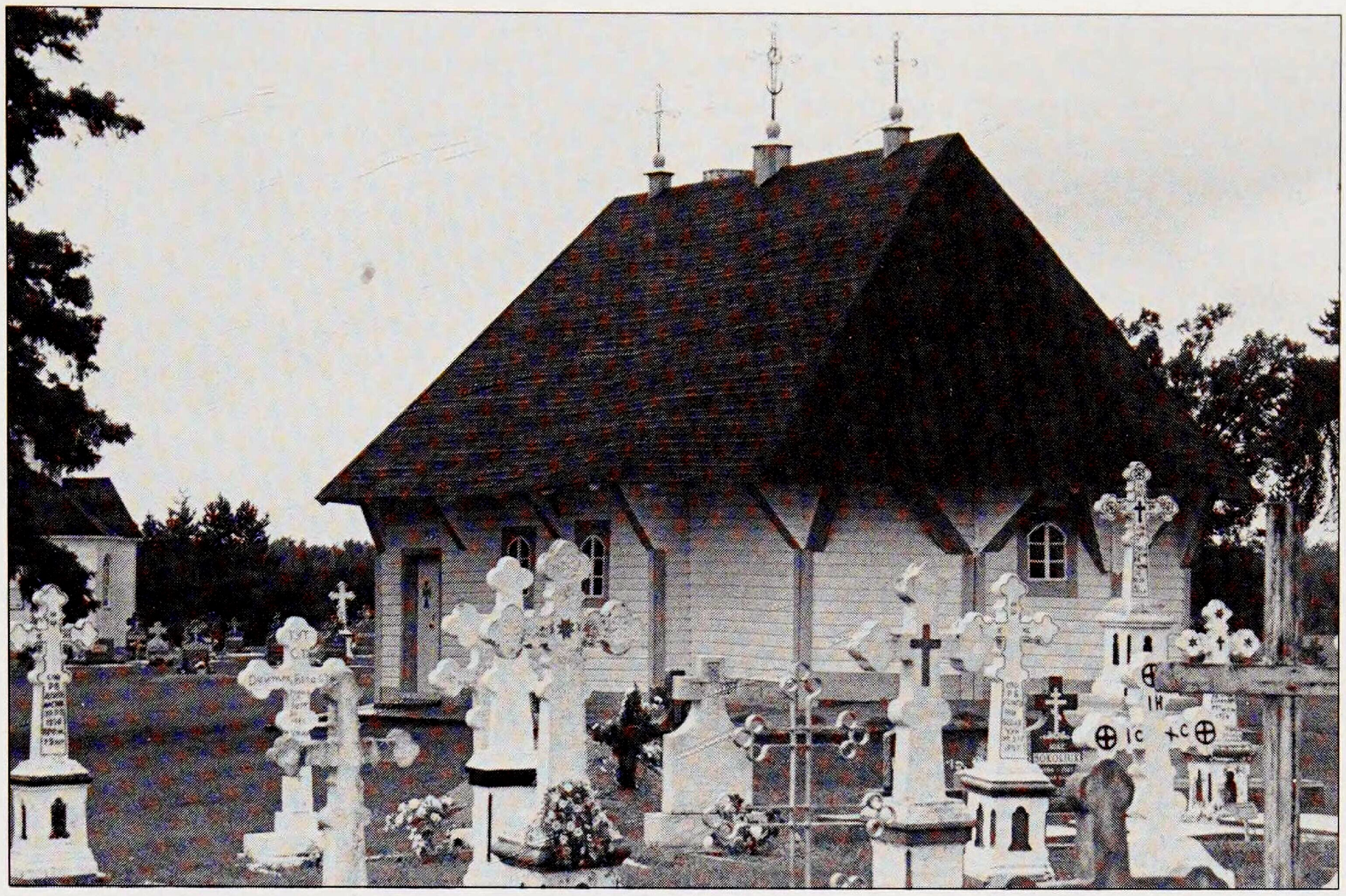

Fig. 1
Wood-frame church, St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church (1935), Gardenton, Man. (All photographs by the author)
▶

aspiration as well as the guardian of the culture and identity of a people. Thus, the church had both a spiritual and a secular role. Its form symbolized the elements of Christian belief, but also signalled the presence and distinction of the congregation it served. It was an icon of identity in the Ukrainian landscape, its design transcending its religious significance.

The Church in the New World

Within a few years of settlement in Canada, Ukrainian communities were sufficiently established and cohesive to contemplate building a church. The structure of Ukrainian rural settlement in the West, where emigrants from particular villages or districts settled together, meant that congregations in the New World often had the same level of homogeneity as in the old country, thus facilitating the transference of architectural stylistic norms into the pioneer environment.

The first church of any pioneer community was likely to be modest in size and decor, reflecting the economy of the agricultural frontier and the limited skills at the community's disposal. Most pioneer church builders were, at best, skilled in carpentry; it is doubtful if any had architectural training; hence, they built from memory, replicating the church of their former village. Difficult architectural constructions such as the Byzantine dome (*banya*) were often omitted from early pioneer churches, giving them an appearance more reminiscent of the traditional church designs before baroque elements became widely adopted in western Ukraine. Many of these early pioneer churches and bell towers, built of log like their old country counterparts, were a direct extension of the centuries-old folk traditions of building in wood.

In Manitoba, two of these early pioneer era churches still survive: St. Michael's Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Gardenton and, some twelve miles (19 km) east, St. Elias Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Sirko. These two buildings exemplify the evolution of pioneer church design: both are log structures built by immigrants from Bukovyna; both were built within a few years of the settlement of their respective areas, St. Michael's in 1899 and St. Elias in 1909; and both have been replaced by more modern buildings that have incorporated similar design elements.

St. Michael's was the first Greek Orthodox church built in Canada. Built between 1897 and 1899 by immigrants, mostly from Onut, Bukovyna, it was of the plan most popular in western Ukraine: three frames oriented on an east–west axis with the central frame slightly larger than the adjacent two, jutting out to provide a cruciform plan. Originally the building had a straw-thatched, low-pitched gable roof and lacked the distinctive *banyas* that are often the hallmark of Ukrainian religious architecture.[13] In 1915 the initial roof

was replaced and a dome structure was incorporated into thebuilding. Menholy [Manoly] Khalaturnyk, acarpenter and builder, rebuilt the roof according to examples recalled from his native Bukovyna.[14] He incorporated a central dome resting on an octagonal base and added two small cupolas at the ridge of the hipped roofs over the outer frames. This addition reflected the rising national consciousness of the Ukrainian settlers in the Gardenton area, many of whom had only recently begun to favour the designation "Ukrainian" rather than the imprecise "Austrian" or the more parochial "Galician" or "Bukovynian" to describe their ethnicity/nationality.[15] Emigration and settlement had strengthened national consciousness by exposure to a thriving Ukrainian language press and more frequent contact with Ukrainians from other parts of Ukraine. Hence, it was not surprising that Khalaturnyk selected a roof style common to religious architecture in Ukraine and emblematic of the Ukrainian presence.[16]

Some years earlier, in 1909, Khalaturnyk had built St. Elias Greek Orthodox Church at Sirko. This log church and bell tower followed the traditional Carpathian-Ukrainian design. Without the distinctive *banyas*, St. Elias resembled the traditional peasant house of Bukovyna in its profile, form, construction and, particularly, its distinctive, heavy overhanging roof.[17] In a great many respects, these two early pioneer churches and others like them represented a simple transfer of culture without great change effected by the process.

Pioneer communities were always exposed to the influences of Anglo-Canadian culture. Although the form of the church was relatively resistant to change through incorporation of alien design features, change was effected quite rapidly in the method of construction. Log, the commonly used material in the pioneer era, gave way to sawn lumber. Wood-frame churches made their appearance in the early 1900s; most were fairly simple, although some were sophisticated structures with internally expressed domes, multi-frame plans, transepts and animated roof lines.[18] There is no uniform chronology of evolution, for all depended upon the economic progress of the parish. Depressed economic circumstances confined some parishes to modest expressions in the new churches if, indeed, the old pioneer church was replaced at all. For others, more fortunately placed, agricultural prosperity permitted construction

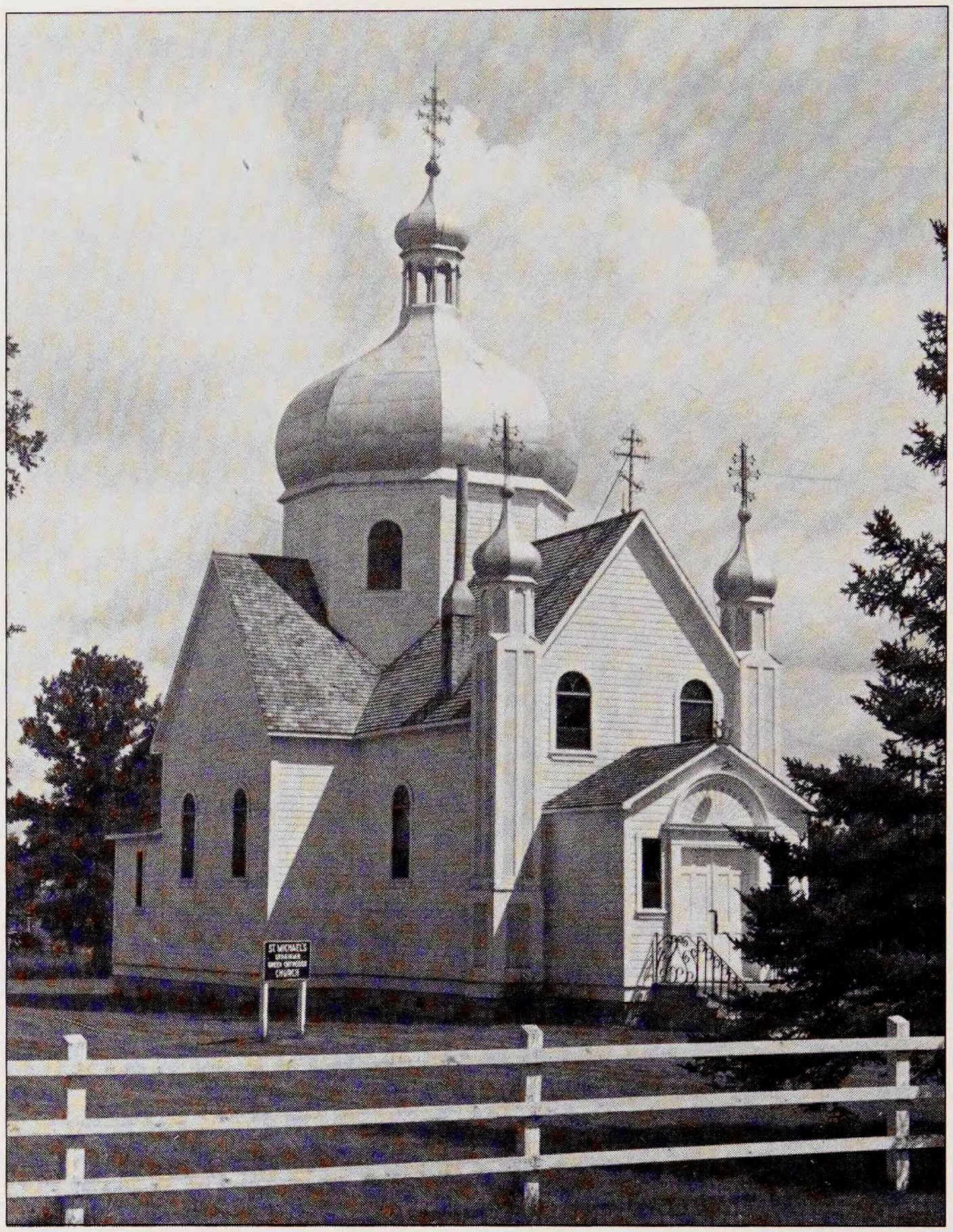

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Fig. 2
Ukrainian pioneer log church, St. Elias Ukrainian Orthodox Church (1909), Sirko, Man.

of larger, more ornate, wood-frame churches. In some instances, carpenter/builders attempted to replicate the ornate and sophisticated stone churches of their homeland, with remarkable success. The products of this cultural transference were not products of a vernacular tradition but, as Diana Thomas Kordan notes, "comprise a genuine stylistic class worthy of study and discussion on its own merits."[19]

These churches reflected the traditions and tastes of church architecture as experienced by their builders before they emigrated from western Ukraine. Regional styles were incorporated into the churches built in Canada, as were design elements then being adopted in the homeland. But the carpenters/builders, constructing wood-frame churches, were influenced by New World conditions in many ways. Exposure to other traditions of ecclesiastical architecture undoubtedly changed their approach toward

design. Even if a builder was intent upon replicating a homeland design, the increasing availability of stock materials from building suppliers in urban centres influenced building form and design. Stock sizes of lumber, plywood, door frames, hinges and so forth removed much of the individual spontaneity associated with the early log churches.

It is in these wood-frame churches that the Gothic-arch church window begins to appear. Alien to Ukrainian and Byzantine traditions, it was incorporated into Ukrainian prairie churches simply because these church windows were easily available through any builder's catalogue. Acceptance was eased by the popular association of the Gothic arch with the religious buildings of western Europe and North America. Whether this was an economically or culturally fuelled intrusion is hard to determine; perhaps it showed elements of both. What is certain is that it reflected the cultural changes taking place within the Ukrainian rural communities during the same period.

A more dramatic modification of the usual designs associated with wood-frame churches was the incorporation of twin tall narrow towers on either side of the entryway. These towers were generally capped with small *banyas*. Thomas Kordan states that the "twin tower motif at the west end of the church is unquestionably linked to the influence of western European Baroque architecture in Ukraine during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries."[20] This design is rare in Ukraine—builders of wooden churches in Ukraine did not attach tall narrow towers to the fronts of their structures—yet, it is a common motif found on wood-frame Ukrainian churches across the Prairies. Thomas Kordan argues that the influence of indigenous French-Canadian church design upon Ukrainian builders was responsible for the adoption of this motif into their churches. French Catholic influence penetrated into Ukrainian communities via the Uniate (Greek Catholic) church and Catholic missionary orders such as the Basilians and the Oblates.[21] In Komarno and Gimli, Manitoba, Ukrainian Catholic churches in this style were built for local congregations by a Belgian contractor, who presumably used Belgian or French models as a basis for the design, adding the Ukrainian *banyas* and other decorative elements to lend a "Ukrainian" appearance to the building.[22] The significance is not that this Gothic element was introduced into the Ukrainian design, but that it was accepted by the clergy and the congregation. It is argued here that such an acceptance of an alien architectural element would only be possible within a community which was already partly acculturated. Like the church building, the community was no longer purely Ukrainian; in its material and non-material culture, it was firmly Ukrainian-Canadian.

The churches designed and built by Father Philip Ruh of the Oblate missionary order well illustrate the process of change within the Ukrainian communities of the West. Ruh, born in Alsace, joined the Oblate Fathers (the Catholic missionary order) and received training in Germany, where he studied theology, economics, botany, art, astronomy and architecture. After his ordination in 1910, Ruh was briefly assigned to Ukraine, where he learned to read and speak Ukrainian, before he was posted to Alberta. Although not a trained architect, Ruh built at least thirty churches across the Prairies and as far east as St. Catharines, Ontario.[23]

In his churches Ruh demonstrated a genuine interest in and respect for the architectural traditions of Ukraine as well as a powerful architectural imagination. He accommodated Roman Catholic influences into his designs yet consciously strove to retain the "Ukrainian" appearance of his churches. In so doing he produced some spectacular designs, often monumental in scale, which, like the communities they served, were as much a product of the New World as they were of the Old. Superficially, they are fully Ukrainian in appearance, but closer examination reveals absorption of many non-Ukrainian traditions. The incorporation of alien practices paralleled the incorporation of alien motifs. In Ruh's churches, as in many of the churches built after the passing of the pioneer era, chairs or even pews were installed as parishioners abandoned the traditional practice of worshipping kneeling or standing, segregated by sex on either side of the central aisle. Along with the concession to comfort came a recognition of diminishing language facility, the introduction of bilingual services and the increasing use of English within the liturgy. Equally importantly, non-Ukrainian architectural elements had become so common both in church architecture and everyday life that they were becoming regarded as a part of the Ukrainian tradition by the people themselves.

In the post-war era a number of Ukrainian-born Canadian architects have attempted to retain the Ukrainian essence in their designs

for new churches. For some, such as Radoslav Zuk, the approach has been to capture the traditional elements in an abstract way while using modern technologies and building methods.[24] Others, like Victor Deneka, have taken a more cautious approach, blending the aesthetics of the Ukrainian tradition with modern construction methodologies but eschewing the simplistic imposition of stylized emblems of the Ukrainian presence upon otherwise undistinguished buildings. Regardless of the approach, innovative design of modern Ukrainian churches is invariably controversial, possibly because the degree of assimilation of the Ukrainian community into the mainstream of Anglo-Canadian culture is so great that many cling to the need to maintain an easily recognizable emblem in the landscape. Ironically, for the assimilated, ethnic kitsch may be more recognizable and more comforting than innovative design founded squarely on traditions inspired by the body of architecture closely identified with Ukraine. This reliance on superficial symbols has led to the fostering of mediocrity; obvious symbolism in much of Ukrainian church design parodies Ukrainian architecture. Sadly, this architectural mediocrity reflects the absence of cultural substance that pervades all aspects of everyday life.[25]

If the form and design of the Ukrainian church serve as a metaphor for cultural change, as is argued here, they function most effectively in the context of the wider religious landscape. Each church reflects the progress of change or the degree of assimilation present in the community at the time of church construction. Taken together, the range of church buildings constitutes an effective record within a region; individually, each church alone seldom offers a record of the process of cultural change.

There are exceptions, of course. On occasion, original buildings, when replaced, were not removed and so continue to stand alongside the new church, as at Sirko, Manitoba, where the pioneer church of 1909 stands adjacent to its 1950 replacement. One is traditional, practical and aesthetically simple; the other, emblematic, self-conscious and culturally hybrid: both offer a commentary upon the nature of the society that built them.

For the most part, the churchyard and cemetery offer the most complete record of the process of acculturation. As landscape features, cemeteries are assemblages of personal memorials; often, the collective quality of memorialization stands out. Grave markers point to a common past rather than to the specific persons whose names appear on them.[26] Indeed, as Lowenthal further remarks, cemeteries matter less as repositories for the dead than as fields of remembrance for the living.[27] The landscape of commemoration becomes the landscape of the past, commemorating not individuals, but the society of which they were a part.

Ukrainian cemeteries in rural areas provide a good record of socio-economic change—a record, moreover, for which chronology is inscribed with some precision, as most grave markers carry the date of birth and death as well as the name and other personal details of

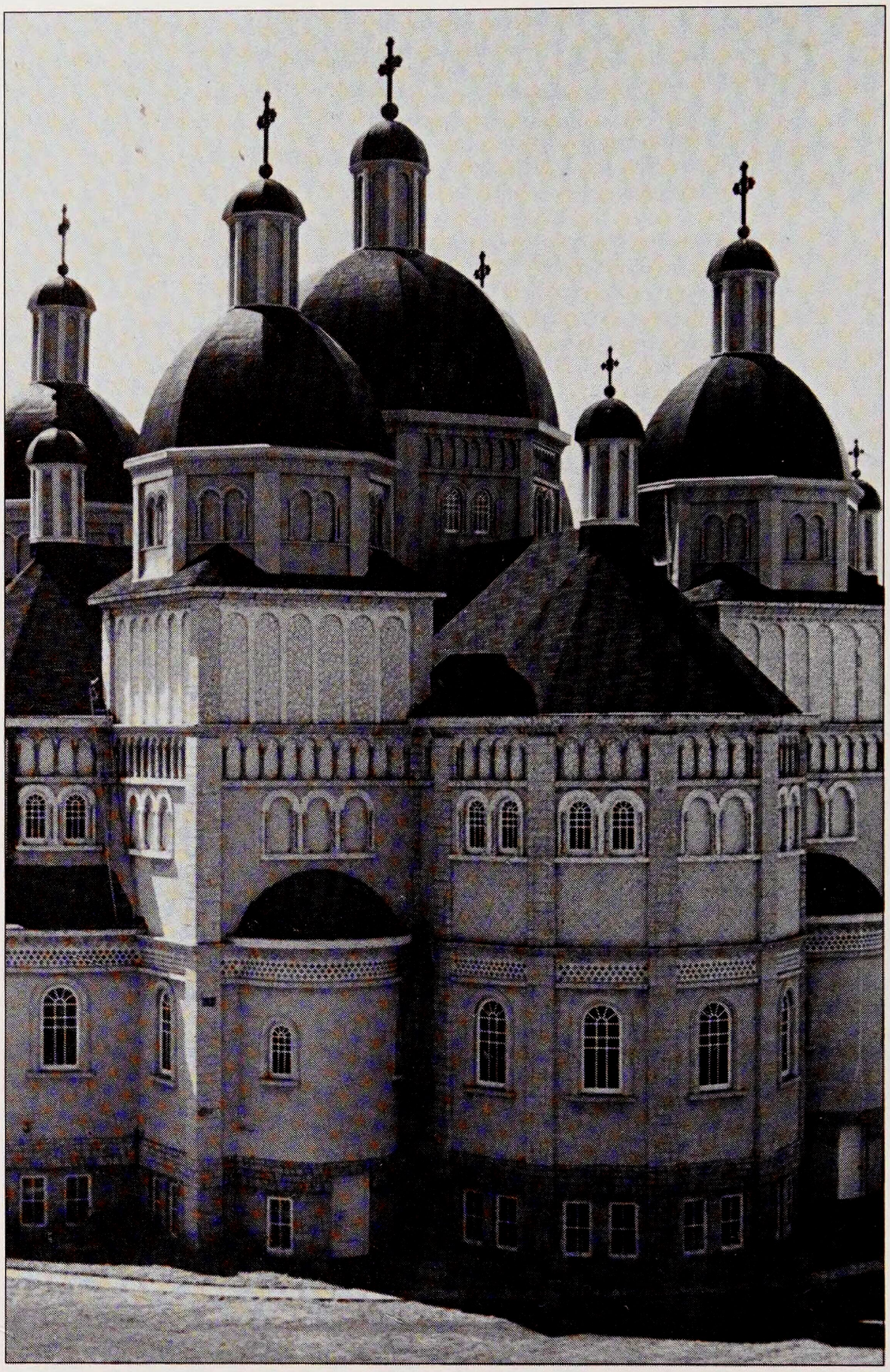

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Fig. 3
Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception (1930), Cooks Creek, Man. Reverend Philip Ruh was the architect.

those commemorated. The transition from frontier immigrant society to the mainstream of Canadian life is recorded in the style and nature of memorial crosses and grave markers and in the inscriptions they carry.

The first grave markers were usually simple wooden crosses, bearing the name of the deceased and, perhaps, a date of death, carved into the wood in Cyrillic characters. Today, most of these early markers have disappeared; when they survive, any inscription is indecipherable on wood exposed to weathering for several decades. In the 1920s and 1930s, earlier in some areas, many Ukrainian communities adopted a new technology to manufacture more durable tombstones and memorials. Concrete poured into forms to create a Catholic or Orthodox cross made a more enduring marker. Inscriptions were drawn into the concrete before it set, and later, after the "stone" was painted white, the lettering was picked out in black. Many of the early wooden crosses were replaced by this type of marker, the inscription faithfully transcribed from wood to stone.[28]

Most of these concrete crosses were manufactured locally by one local contractor who offered a limited choice of design.[29] Thus, cemeteries within various localities came to have a certain uniformity of headstone design until professionally cut granite tombstones began to be imported from the larger urban centres. These new granite stones often bear no indication of religious affiliation in their style; most are of the upright flat slab variety, though a few—and presumably the more expensive—have been cut into the shape of the Orthodox Cross of St. Andrew.

If the material and form of the grave marker parallel the economic development of the community in the use of material—first the use of local wood, next the use of imported materials by local craftsmen to manufacture a local product, and finally the import of a product professionally made outside the community—the inscriptions borne upon each further emphasize the degree of change within the community. Early graves bear inscriptions in Cyrillic. Regional dialect forms, even misspellings, may be found and the incursion of various influences traced. For example, in southeastern Manitoba, the use of *say* rather than *tse* (this) as late as 1924 indicates the survival of strong Bukovynian regional

▶
Fig. 4
Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church (1964), Winnipeg. Radoslav Zuk was the architect.

influences; the use of *hoda* rather than *roku* for "year" suggests the influence of the Russian Orthodox clergy was felt until the mid-1920s, when *roku* became the favoured form. Similarly, the process of adopting English expressions into the Ukrainian-Canadian lexicon may be seen in the use of the Ukrainianized English *Aprilya*, rather than the correct Ukrainian term *kviten'*, for April, or *Maya*, rather than *traven'*, for May. After 1945 English becomes used on gravestones, with the Ukrainian *Vichnaya Pamyat'* in Latin characters. The decline of language retention is clearly catalogued and dated. Even subtle shifts in ethnic consciousness are recorded. The resurgence of ethnic pride, or awareness of heritage, is best seen in the appearance of bilingual gravestones in the late 1970s. For some this is a mixture of English and Ukrainian in the inscription, but for others a gravestone with a Cyrillic inscription on one face and English on the other indicates a recognition of the bicultural nature of Ukrainian-Canadian society in the 1980s.

This paper has argued that the Ukrainian sacred landscape can function as a metaphor for cultural change in the wider Ukrainian community. This is not to say that it is perceived as such by the community in question, or even by mainstream society in western Canada. Unlike most metaphors, it is not static, but is evolving continuously, reflecting not only the time but the nature and the rate of acculturation of Ukrainians. Therein, perhaps, lies its unique status.

Notes

1. Mirian Elston, "The Russian in Our Midst," *Westminster* (1915): 530–36; idem, "Ruthenians in Western Canada: Canadian Citizens from Russians," *Onward* 26 (April 1919): n.p.; "Our New Immigrants—The Galicians," *The Great West Magazine* 4 (December 1898): 220–27; "Yorkton Teacher's Experiences among New Canadians," *The Yorkton Enterprise*, 15 January 1920; Gilbert Parfitt, "Ukrainian Cottages," *Architecture Canada* 18 (August 1941): 132–33.
2. For example, John C. Lehr, *Ukrainian Vernacular Architecture in Alberta*, Historic Sites Service, Occasional Paper No. 1 (Edmonton: Alberta Culture, Historical Resources Division, 1976); Demjan Hohol', *The Grekul House: A Land Use and Structural History*, Historic Sites Service Occasional Paper No. 14 (Edmonton: Alberta Culture, 1985); Gwen Dowsett, "Folk Housing: The Vernacular Architecture of the Ukrainian People in Manitoba," *Border Crossings* 5, no. 4 (Fall 1986): 12–20; Anna Maria Baran, *Ukrains'ki katolyts'ki tserkvy Saskachevanu* (Saskatoon: Ukrainian Catholic Council of Saskatchewan, 1977); Savelia Curniski, "Icons and Banyas: Ukrainian Orthodox Churches in Saskatchewan," *Selected Papers from the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Annual Meetings 1975 and 1976* (Ottawa: SSAC, 1981), 1–7.
3. An initial attempt was made in John C. Lehr, "The Landscape of Ukrainian Settlement in the Canadian West," *Great Plains Quarterly* 2, no. 2 (Spring, 1982): 94–105.
4. Stella Hryniuk, "A Peasant Society in Transition: Ukrainian Peasants in Five East Galician Counties, 1880-1900" (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Manitoba, 1985); John-Paul Himka, "The Background to Emigration: Ukrainians of Galicia and Bukovyna, 1848-1914," in *A Heritage in Transition*, Manoly R. Lupul, ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 11–32; N. Bilachevsky, "The Peasant Art of Little Russia (The Ukraine)" in *Peasant Art in Austria and Hungary*, Charles Holme, ed. (London: Studio, 1911), 24.
5. Before 1914, over 120,000 Ukrainians immigrated into Canada. Probably as many again immigrated to the United States and Brazil.
6. Bilachevsky, "Peasant Art," 24.
7. Vladimir J. Kaye, *Early Ukrainian Settlements in Canada 1895-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Ukrainian Canadian Research Foundation, 1964), 139; Petro Zvarych, "Do pytannya i postupu v materiyal'ni kulturi ukrains'kykh poselentsiv u kanadi" [On the Problem of Development and Progress of the Material Culture of Ukrainian Settlers in Canada], *Zbirnyk na poshanu Zenona Kuzeli* (Paris and New York: Zapysky naukovoho tovarystva im. Shevchenka, 1962), 151–53; Andriy Nahachewsky, *Ukrainian Dug-Out Dwellings in East Central Alberta*, Historic Sites Service, Occasional Paper No. 11 (Edmonton: Alberta Culture, 1985).
8. Lehr, "Landscape of Ukrainian Settlement," 102; and Hohol', *Grekul House*, 46–65.
9. John C. Lehr, "Colour Preferences and Building Decoration among Ukrainians in Western Canada," *Prairie Forum* 6 (2: 1981): 203–6.
10. G.W. Simpson, "The Names 'Rus', 'Russia', 'Ukraine', and Their Historical Background," *Slavistica: Proceedings of the Institute of Slavistics of the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences* 10 (Winnipeg: Trident Press, 1951), 15.
11. Orest T. Martynowych, "Village Radicals and Peasant Immigrants: The Society Roots of Factionalism among Ukrainian Immigrants in Canada 1896–1918" (Unpublished MA thesis, University of Manitoba, 1978), 97–98.

12. Nathan Glazer, "Towards a Sociology of Small Ethnic Groups: A Discourse and Discussion," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 12 (2: 1980): 9–10; also Martynowych, "Village Radicals," 97–98.
13. Curniski has noted that the *banya* has become an emblem of ethnicity and that Ukrainian communities appear to be reluctant to build any church without a *banya*. See Curniski, "Icons and Banyas," 2. On homeland styles in church architecture see George Korbyn, *Ukrainian Style in Church Architecture* (Arcadia, Calif.: By the author, 1983); Paul R. Magocsi and Florian Zapletal, *Wooden Churches in the Carpathians* (Vienna: W. Braumüller, 1982).
14. "Ukrainian Churches in Manitoba: A Building Inventory" (Unpublished research report, Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Winnipeg, 1987), 13–20.
15. The term "Ukrainian" did not enter into popular use until after 1917. It was not employed as a national designation by the Census of Canada until 1931.
16. "Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba," 13–20.
17. Ibid., 18.
18. Ibid., 22–30.
19. Diana Thomas Kordan, "Tradition in a New World: Ukrainian Canadian Churches in Alberta," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* 13, no. 1 (1988): 3.
20. Thomas Kordan "Tradition in a New World," 5.
21. Ibid., 6; Martynowych, "Village Radicals," 129–32.
22. Michael Ewanchuk, personal communication with author, 1 September 1988.
23. Robert Hunter, "Ukrainian Canadian Folk Architecture: The Churches of Father Philip Ruh," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada, Selected Papers* 5 (1982): 25.
24. Radoslav Zuk, "Ukrainian Church Architecture in Canada," *Slavs in Canada* 2, Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Canadian Slavs 1967 (Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 1968): 233–34; idem, "Architectural Significance and Culture," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 16 (3: 1984): 20–26; and idem, "Endurance, Disappearance and Adaptation: Ukrainian Material Culture in Canada," in *Visible Symbols*, Manoly R. Lupul, ed. (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta, 1984), 3–14.
25. Zuk, "Endurance, Disappearance and Adaptation," 9.
26. David Lowenthal, "Age and Artifact," in *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, D.W. Meinig, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 123.
27. Ibid.
28. Mrs. P. Kossowan, personal communication with author, 13 May 1988.
29. Ivan Machnee, personal communication with author, 27 June 1988.

Three Urban Parishes: A Study of Sacred Space

David J. Goa

Résumé

La culture matérielle propre à trois congrégations catholiques ukrainiennes d'Edmonton, en Alberta, reflète des courants de vie paroissiale distincts mais apparentés. L'architecture, l'aménagement intérieur et l'iconographie ont subi des variantes qui soulignent l'importance de l'histoire et de l'évolution du symbolisme culturel, de l'imagination humaine et des traditions.

Abstract

Different but related streams of parish life are reflected in the material culture surrounding three Ukrainian Catholic congregations in Edmonton, Alberta. Variations in architecture, interior space and iconography show the impact of history and shifts in cultural symbolism, human imagination and tradition.

When we consider the material culture of the Ukrainian community in Canada from its initial settlement to the present, there is one large source of objects that immediately comes to mind: the Church. To the larger Canadian society, it is a hallmark of the Ukrainian tradition; to many Ukrainians, it is the centre of social, cultural and religious life. The church, whether Eastern Rite Catholic or Orthodox, was virtually the first institution to be built in communities across the Prairies early in the century, was maintained throughout the life of the founders down to the present day and continues to serve hundreds of rural and urban communities from Halifax to Victoria. In it we find the symbolic core of Ukrainian tradition. Tradition is embodied in the architecture, the iconography and the liturgical drama, played from evening to evening throughout the weekly cycle of services and the liturgical seasons. From the church, the faithful are taken and laid to rest in the cemetery. To the church, the newborn are brought and baptized into the Kingdom of God. The religious and much of the social and cultural life of the community occurs here; and, here, surrounded by the gathered saints (typified in the icons) and in the presence of the drama of the liturgy, the meaning of life in all its fullness is sanctified and celebrated.

This process of sanctification and the role of Ukrainian church architecture and iconography are the focus of this paper. The Eastern Christian community has the richest symbolic tradition in Christianity. Its ritual system provides and shapes this process of sanctification. Its actions are understood as the primary work (*leitourgia*, "public work") of the faithful and are best carried out with the full weight of tradition helping to form and inform the meaning of the action. How has the tradition of architecture and iconography fared in the process of being transplanted to Canada and the modern world?

Through an examination of three Ukrainian Catholic parishes in Edmonton, Alberta, we can glimpse how the vagaries of history have affected the shape of the religious material culture of the Ukrainian Catholic community in Canada. We will examine the architectural setting and iconography of these three parishes and reflect critically on their relationship to the symbolic tradition in which they claim to be rooted.

Three Parishes, One Tradition?

St. Josaphat's Cathedral in Edmonton, the seat of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy, gave birth to St. Basil the Great Church in 1967 and to St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Church in 1955. All three serve the Ukrainian community. All three use the Liturgy

of St. John Chrysostom. All three are under the same bishop, though St. Basil the Great is served directly by a religious order, the Basilian Fathers.[1] These three churches are distinct in their architecture and icongraphy, in the shape of liturgical services and in the languages used to serve the liturgy. Together, they tell us a great deal about how the litugical tradition has been embodied in the current historical situation. This paper focuses on architecture and iconography, leaving the shape of liturgy and liturgical language to other studies.

The Church of St. Josaphat was built in 1904.[2] The present structure was built in 1939. Pope Pius XII divided the one Eparchy that served Canada into three on 3 March 1948. The Eparchy of Edmonton was formed, and St. Josaphat's became a cathedral, the bishop's see. At the time, it was under the administration of the Basilian Fathers and was the sole Ukrainian Catholic parish in Edmonton. The Basilian Fathers have been the primary clergy to serve the Ukrainian Catholic community from 1902.

St. Basil the Great Church had a humble beginning on 2 November 1947, when Father S. Kurylo, OSBM, began regular services in St. Anthony's Separate School.[3] The parish was formally established by Bishop Neil Savaryn, OSBM, in 1948 to serve the needs of Ukrainians residing in the south side of Edmonton. It moved from worshipping in a Roman Catholic church to St. Basil's Cultural Centre, the first building completed on the site, to the completed church on 24 September 1967. The Basilian Fathers included a large residence and monastery along with the cultural centre and church on a singularly impressive site.

St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Church was formed in October 1955 and moved into its current classical Byzantine-style church in 1981.[4] The crisis leading to its formation was a series of changes in the liturgical pattern at St. Josaphat's, culminating in the adoption of the Gregorian calendar as the indicator of the feast day cycle.[5] Although the bishop requested that services by the liturgical calendar (Julian, or old style) continue to be offered for those who wanted them, this compromise was found unsatisfactory. After several years a portion of the community sought to establish a new church, faithful to the traditional feast-day cycle. The request was granted by Bishop Savaryn, and the parish of St. George's was formed. This parish has been influenced by a Byzantine liturgical renaissance, a movement found in numerous Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic churches in this century.[6]

Design and Building

St. Josaphat's Cathedral was designed by Father Philip Ruh, OMI. Construction began in 1939 and was completed with the solemn dedication in 1947 by Cardinal Eugene Tisserant, Secretary of the Congregation for Eastern Churches. Father Ruh was born in 1883 in Bikenholtz, Lorraine, Germany, near the French border. At fifteen years of age, he was sponsored by the Oblate Fathers and studied in their novitiate in Holland and later in Germany, where his interest in art and architecture blossomed.

After his ordination, Ruh was sent by his superiors to work with the Ukrainians in Lviv. He stayed initially with Metropolitan Andrew Sheptytsky, a father of the Byzantine liturgical renaissance in the Ukrainian church, and later at the Basilian monastery in Buchach, where he learned Ukrainian. On 20 April 1911, he left Europe for missionary work among the Ukrainian immigrants in western Canada. During his tenure in the West, Ruh built many churches for the Ukrainian Catholics, from Grimsby and St. Catharines in Ontario and the "prairie basilica" in Cooks Creek, Manitoba, to St. Josaphat's in Edmonton. He was also the architect for Our Lady of Lourdes grotto at Skaro, Alberta.[7]

Father Ruh used a rather eclectic mix of architectural styles in designing St. Josaphat's Cathedral. Although it greets the eye primarily as a Byzantine-style church, one does hesitate over several features. The cornices on the drum that support the cupolas and part of the facade are based on Roman style, while the cross-supporting smaller cupolas and drums, set on an arch of the large cupolas, are in the Renaissance tradition. The columns in front of the facade are in a pseudo-classical or American colonial style. The cathedral has seven octagonal copper cupolas, each topped with a Roman cross. Only the central cupola is open on the inside, playing a role in the interior iconographic design of the church. The walls are red brick with pilasters of darker brick and ornamental crosses of yellow brick in the upper sections. It is a two-storey building with the upper portion serving as the church proper: sanctuary, nave, transept, four added square areas in each corner where the transept meets the nave (two of which are sacristies) and narthex. A spacious choir gallery extends over part of the nave and the narthex. The

chancel is raised three steps above the floor with the first step serving as a *solea*. The iconostasis was designed by Professor J. Buchmaniuk.[8]

The interior space of Eastern Catholic churches is by tradition covered with iconography.[9] Virtually all the visible space, from the narthex through the nave, side aisles and transepts, and sanctuary to the apse and domes, is painted according to a form devel-oped in the Eastern Christian tradition. To enter such a church is to enter the gathered community of the redeemed. The whole church is an icon of the presence of the Kingdom of God moving from the prophets of the Hebrew Bible toward the Christ, and from Christ outward in the lives of the saints and the gathered people. They are all present, all one in the gathered kingdom of which the church is a microcosm.

Eastern Christian churches are temples, not meeting houses.[10] As with the whole tradition of temple cult in world religions, we have here a microcosm, a sacred space. The specific meaning of these churches is an an archetype of the "restored" creation, a world of communion free of alienation, the "image and likeness" of the creation as God intended it. For this reason, there are canons governing the design of these churches, and portions of them are built ritually.

Professor Julian Buchmaniuk was commissioned to do the iconography for St. Josaphat's Cathedral. He was born in Smorziw, Galicia, western Ukraine, in 1885. In 1908 he entered the Academy of Art in Krakow and, as a student, visited art schools in Munich, Rome, Florence and Milan. He painted the Basilian monastery chapel in Zhovkva. Later he studied at the Czech Academy of Art and was an instructor in several schools in Lviv after the First World War. He came to Edmonton in 1950 and began the monumental task of painting St. Josaphat's. Along with designing the iconostasis and doing the wall mural painting, he painted the icon of the Theotokos (the birth giver of God) and icons of Christ and St. Josaphat. The icon of St. Nicholas and the icons on the royal and deacon's doors were painted by Parasia Ivanec, and the festal icons on the iconostasis were painted by Ivan Denysenko.[11]

The painting of Buchmaniuk uses elements common to the neo-Byzantine style. However, this is as close as the painter comes to a regard for the iconographic tradition of the Eastern Church. Parishioners suggest that this church is in the "baroque style, with realistic traits, which had become, as it were, the Ukrainian style, accepted under the influence of Netherlands' baroque, with some Byzantine elements." We are told that the

> artist not only created an external work of art, but also portrayed the qualities, interior dispositions and character of the individual subjects; he also succeeded in putting spirit into the portrayed actions. He attempted to respond to the mentality and receptivity to art of today's person, and so his subjects are full of life, grace and realism, expressing a profound religious sense.[12]

Apparently Buchmaniuk used models for many of the figures. Various members of the congregation are recognizable in the paintings.[13] He also included in the murals a painting of God the Father on the central cupola, completely foreign (one could even say heretical) to the Byzantine tradition. His attempt to depict the "divine attributes of majesty, omnipotence and infinity" resulted in a rather fierce image. The artist was asked to tone down the painting so that it would not inspire quite so much dread in the viewer.[14]

The immediate impression on entering St. Josaphat's is that one is entering another world. It is completely painted in soft pastels, delicate and pleasing. The column and arch structure is womb-like, yet expansive. The central dome opens as the canopy of heaven; one is caught up in regard.

All of Buchmaniuk's painting is stylized. Elements of neo-Byzantine style can be discerned. What is remarkable is that the neo-Byzantine tradition is not in any way the artistic much less iconographic tradition influencing the overall work. The ornamentation—doves with marvellous swoops of air, fish with bubbles of water, lovely floral motifs and grape tendrils—is simple, with a fine sense of graphic design. It gives the impression of a Victorian picture book prepared for a child's imagination (as adults oddly abstract it), exuding innocence, charm and delight.

The human figures contrast oddly with the decorative work. While the torsos of the biblical figures are line drawings, flat and outlined like the animals and flowers, the heads are fully developed naturalistic portraits painted in deeper colours, images of the folks next door. They differ only in having a propensity for beards and the wearing of rather odd clothing. This type of portraiture can be found in Protestant Sunday School literature from the late nineteenth century through the 1950s, and this is clearly the tradition

governing the general work. Realistic, perfectly natural and quite cozy. Cozy, that is, except for the image of the Last Judgement. To the right of the angel (a fire marshal in action), "bathed in the light," is a "family portrait" of the redeemed rejoicing (fig. 1). To the angel's left, along with Stalin, Hitler, a local art critic and Marxist, are the damned reaping their eternal reward midst the monster death. Flames abound; torment reigns.

The angels throughout are like the ornamentation—stylized, free of individuality, decorative. On the walls of the nave are full-length portraits of various clergy who figured in the history of the parish. These look like photographs from a newspaper or parish bulletin, carefully coloured.

St. Basil the Great Church was designed by Eugene Olekshy, an architect and member of the parish. He worked closely with the various parish committees and the Basilian Fathers who serve the parish. A rather lengthy process was required to amass the necessary land for this large project. In April 1964, the plans for the building complex (church, cultural centre and monastery) were completed and sent for approval to the Basilian hierarchy including the Superior General in Rome. In December this was granted. Construction was complete in the summer of 1967.[15]

Olekshy's design has the church sitting on a very large plaza flanked on the south by the monastery. It is a large building, some 14,000 square feet (1,300 m^2) on the main floor with a seating capacity of 1,200. The main body of the church has a clear height of 45 feet (14 m) with the domed section in the centre rising to 90 feet (27 m). No columns exist to hold up the dome as in traditional building forms. The dome has a diameter of 50 feet (15 m). The building is a square structure with a colonnade ringing it. The central dome, colonnade and soft arch decorative features are the only hint of the Eastern sensibility at St. Basil the Great. Despite this, the educated observer familiar with the architecture of the Christian East would not readily identify this structure as a church of the Christian East. However, the parish identified it as Eastern and Ukrainian, suggesting it retains "the basic characteristics of the Byzantine rite of the Ukrainian Catholic Faith."[16]

The building material is precast concrete, sandblasted to give "a pleasing texture." The exterior walls are constructed of tweed tan brick on lightweight concrete block infill. The interior finished wall surface is a coloured, split-face, lightweight concrete block laid in a scotch bond pattern. Minimal maintenance cost seems to have determined the finish.

The casual observer cannot help noticing that all the materials used in the exterior construction are man-made; nothing is God-given. No wood or rock speaks of nature, a gift of creation. Rather, it is all a poured soup,

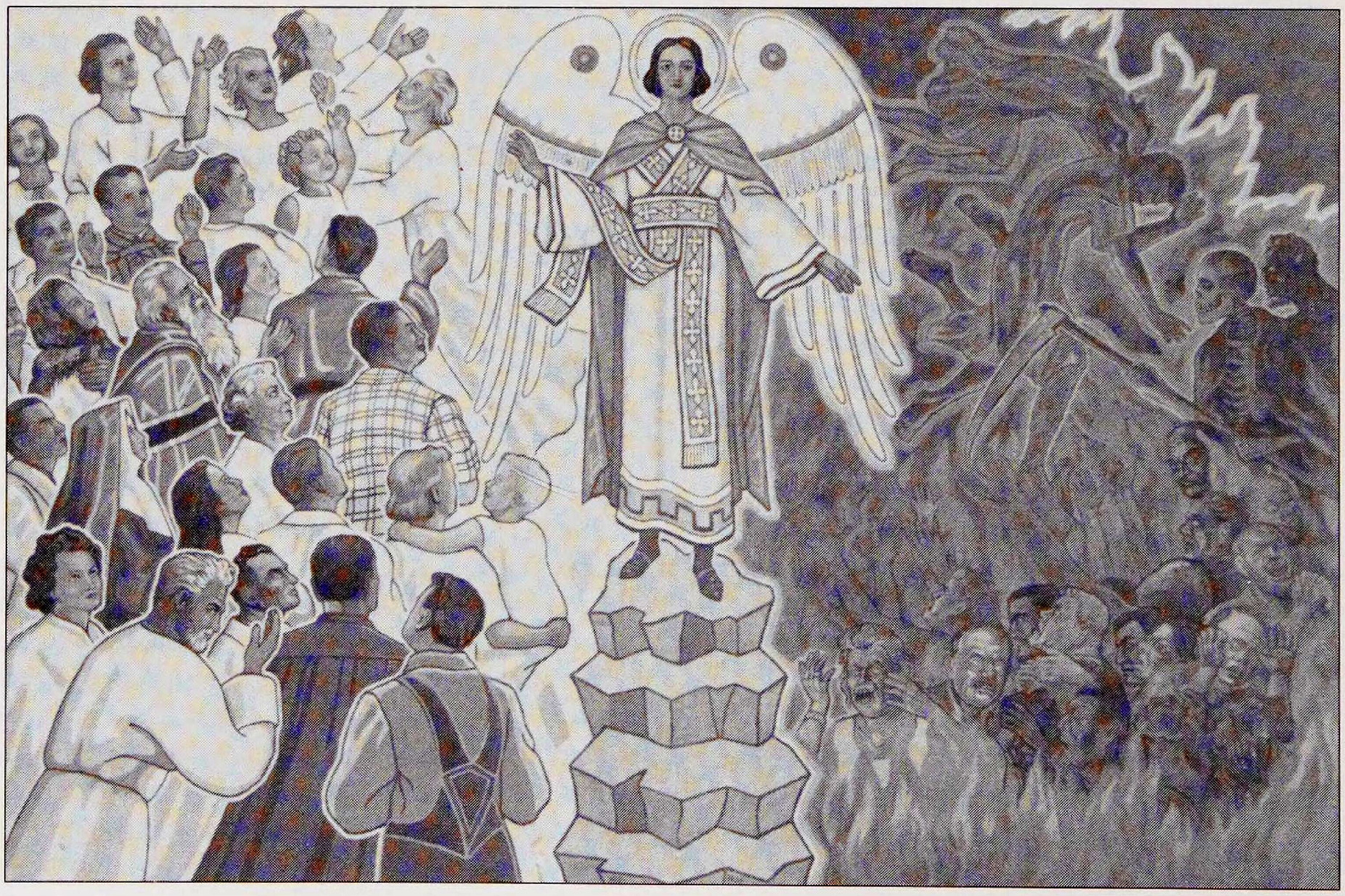

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Fig. 1
The Judgement, St. Josaphat's Cathedral. (All photographs by the author; courtesy of the Folk Life Collection, Provincial Museum of Alberta, Edmonton)

formed by nothing intrinsic, having no inner fidelity, made solely for the convenience of a rude building process.

The building materials used throughout the interior of the church are all commonly found on the exterior of modern office and civic buildings. One gets a little relief from this with the wooden decorative features that form a backdrop for the altar table and frame the side chapels and confessionals. They are warm, but curiously free in design of any specific meaning, an irony when we consider the meaning virtually everything has in an Eastern Christian church built according to the tradition. The marble finish to the walls and floor in the sanctuary stand in contradiction to the concrete "exterior" character of the nave; the viewer feels as if standing outside, looking into the interior space. The total space has the feeling of a thoroughly public area, free of any but the most functional meaning (fig. 2).

▲

Fig. 2
The nave and sanctuary of St. Basil the Great Church.

A dome hangs suspended over the centre of the nave with no echo in the architectural features of the interior or exterior. From the outside it looks like a poorly fitted hat, a beanie far too small for what it is to cover. It clearly is not the "canopy of heaven" much less a symbolic marker of the cosmos transfigured by the light of Christ. According to tradition, the dome is normally accented by an icon of the Pantocrator in the dome, but it is not to be found here either. The dome is not integral to the structure, but simply added to identify this as a Ukrainian church. The effect is to give one a sense that the heavens may plummet at any time; one cannot help but wonder if it promotes a form a "chicken little" spirituality. While the fathers and mothers of the Eastern Church were fond of saying that the church is a type of "heaven descended," this plummeting heaven is clearly not what they meant. Creation is transfigured in the divine liturgy and seen to dwell in the eternal. The symbology should not suggest alternate realities desperately trying to reach each other.

St. Basil's has no iconostasis. It simply was not constructed to have one. The use of iconography is minimal. A large mosaic of Christ shimmers metallic above the altar table. Christ is shown triumphant with hands raised in blessing against the backdrop of the cross. Flames illuminate the area around him and the landscape is in chaos. It is apocalyptic, harking to the destruction of our fragile earth.

The only icons in St. Basil's are on processional banners. Stained-glass windows (a Roman Catholic feature) of the life of the holy Virgin and, in the entrance, of the life of St. Basil the Great resemble the iconographic tradition of the Christian East.

St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Church was designed by Andrew Baziuk, a local architect, under the direction of the artistic committee of the parish.[17] St. George's has a number of professionals and academics as members and made good use of them on this committee. The result shows in this pristine, well-appointed structure. It is modeled on the thirteenth-century Church of St. Basil in Obruch, Volhynia, Ukraine, a church in the classical Byzantine style. A clear concern for a church which would serve the liturgical action of the faithful was stated at the beginning of the planning process: The architecture must not impose any limitations on the actions of worship. There was unanimity in the committee about the role liturgical tradition was to play in their decisions. This can be briefly illustrated by the discussion when the architect suggested that confessionals be built to the left of the sacristy. Although many at St. George's were familiar with the use of confessionals from their time at St. Josaphat's, confessionals are a Latin accretion and not properly part of an Eastern Church. The confessionals were ruled out unanimously. The architect also suggested that several thousand dollars could be saved by building the transept roof in an angular fashion on the outside where it would not be seen and accommodating the curved style called for by tradition on the inside. Again, the committee

opted for the additional expense on the grounds that "it was right" for the structure to be coherent inside and out and that tradition should be followed faithfully. This pristine church was opened in 1983 (fig. 3).

As tradition dictates, the interior was built with an iconostasis in mind. The parish's attention turned to this feature as soon as the building was completed. In 1983 they installed an iconostasis made in Greece by Argyrios Kavroulakis. Currently, parishioners are trying to choose the iconographer who will receive the commission for the murals, festal iconography and the icons on the iconostasis. Three iconographers are being considered—Hieromonk Juvenali, Heiko Scheiper and Michael Moroz. Debate on the issue reflects the sensibilities and interests of the parish.

Hieromonk Juvenali of the Studite Monastery , Woodstock, Ontario, paints in the style of the neo-Byzantine revival. He has an excellent reputation in the Ukrainian Catholic community, having painted the Patriarchal Cathedral of St. Sophia in Rome. St. Sophia is the church built by the late Iosyf Cardinal Slipj and is the central church for the Ukrainian Catholic community throughout the world. He is favoured because of his style, reputation and Ukrainian identity. Unfortunately, Juvenali will not be able to paint the necessary murals and icons for some years.

A second iconographer, Heiko Scheiper, has painted the interior of Holy Protection Church in Toronto in a modified form of the Novgorodian style. His superb work has received considerable attention from the parish. However, Scheiper is not Ukrainian; although he has offered to work in styles representative of Kievan Rus', some parishioners would prefer an iconographer of Ukrainian ancestry.

Recently, a member of the committee viewed the work of Michael Moroz, an iconographer living in Germany. He studied at the Monastery of the Caves, Kiev, and works in the classical Byzantine style with a touch of the late-Muscovite-school influence.

One member of the committee did argue for the consideration of a Ukrainian iconographer working in the naturalistic style. His work, however, was deemed inferior, and the naturalistic style considered an affront to the classical form of the church and incompatible with the theology and spirituality of the icon.

St. George's is a lovely classical Byzantine church, despite several obvious architectural contradictions on the exterior. The plate

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Fig. 3
The nave of St. George's Ukrainian Catholic Church

windows and the use of small, standard-size bricks contradict the fortress-like structure. They do not carry the weight and solidity of the architectural style. Similarly, the use of a concrete, wave-like feature to cape the roof and join it to the walls has a modernistic flavour not particularly suitable to the classical form.

The Divine Presence: Sacred Space

The style of church architecture that developed in Eastern Christian tradition is understood as a form of revelation. Its fundamental insight is that God is present in all creation. This idea is distinct from Western Christian tradition, which tends to see the fall of Adam and Eve as ushering in a rupture in nature that changed the ontological character of the cosmos. The East argues that the fall was essentially a problem in how human beings understand the

world, an epistemological tragedy healed by Christ's entry into death. Through the liturgy, humans participate with the Creator in restoring the sanctification of the cosmos.

The characteristic dome of Eastern Christian churches suggests a transfigured world. The temple, "heaven descended," is the prototype of a "sanctified creation." There is no pointing beyond creation like the spires of Western churches. Rather, the church is a dwelling place of all that is real. The church is the presence of the Kingdom of God. In it all things are united, all creation is revealed in its fullness.

The Eastern Christian church has a vestibule where people enter, a nave where the assembly gathers as the people of God, and a holy table (altar) area. The altar area is the sanctuary or holy place, and it represents the fullness of the Kingdom of God.

According to the Old Testament the people were not allowed to enter the courtyard of the temple, where only certain ranks of priests served. With the coming of Christ, the sacred character of all creation and the priesthood of all believers was revealed. Thus, in the Eastern Church, the laity share in the priesthood of Christ by serving the liturgy in the nave with the priest. The nave—the ship of salvation—is the transfigured "courtyard of the tabernacle."

The priest is not above the laity, but has a specific role in the concelebration of the liturgy. It is imperative that the people participate in the movement, the rhythm and the harmony of the liturgical drama. Pews reduce the congregation to observers or, at best, passive participants. "Passivity" is a notion completely foreign to the Eastern Christian understanding of the Kingdom of God. Pews also foster the notion that the priest is doing something for or on behalf of the people of God—again, a foreign notion. All the faithful are priests serving the divine mysteries. All are part of the harmony of the Kingdom of God. All enter into communion and move toward the sanctuary of the cosmos, the ultimate destiny of all creation, symbolized by the holy table in the sanctuary.

All three parishes under discussion opted for pews in the nave. The argument for this innovation, which began before immigration, is the need for comfort during the lengthy liturgies. The elderly and infirm have always been provided with pews along the perimeter of even the most traditional churches. Whatever the value of this argument, pews not only invite passivity but, what is more important, render the iconographic pattern of movement characteristic of the various liturgies and rites confused or indiscernible. At St. Basil the Great parish this issue is irrelevant, because there is no iconographic structure either to the church or its decoration.

A central feature of the temple as a sacred space is the iconostasis, or icon screen. Functioning as a stand for icons, it contains two sets of doors: the royal doors (or royal gates) at the centre and the deacon's doors at the sides.

Even among the faithful, the icon screen is commonly referred to as a divider between the people's portion of the church and that of the clergy. The tradition, however, refers to it as a "bridge of unity" joining the nave (the present Kingdom of God) and the sanctuary (the Kingdom coming into being). It reveals the movement of human life: living in the fragile presence of divine love while remaining open to the fullness of divine love—of complete communion—in the future. In worship this is presented as the archetype of human experience.

The iconostasis is integral to the sacred space, for it shows the unity of Christ, the holy Theotokos, the saints and angels, and the faithful. The royal gates bear icons of the four evangelists and of the Annunciation. These gates are between an icon of the Theotokos and child—the incarnation of God in the world—and an icon of the Glorified Christ in the fullness of the Second Coming. These two icons reveal the central eschatological mystery at the heart of the liturgy, at the heart of life. They are often referred to as the icons of the First and Second Coming of Christ. Liturgy and life, the tradition teaches, are in the midst of these two cardinal realities. In the life of the faithful, baptism is the incarnation of Christ; their longing for the fullness and perfection of life (the Kingdom of God) is typified by the icon of the Glorified Christ.

St. Josaphat's (fig. 4) and St. George's (fig. 3) parishes both have iconostases that function according to the tradition. The movement of the liturgy uses the royal doors and the icons of the Theotokos and of Christ Glorified to call the faithful to a deeper apprehension of the presence of the divine. In both cases, however, the processional movements are constricted by the pews in the nave from showing a theophany, or the movement between these two realities. Instead of celebrating and calling all creation to the fullness of the sanctified life, showing the faithful how deeply their experience is informed by this

◀ ***Fig. 4***
The iconostasis, St. Josaphat's Cathedral.

movement, the processions are reduced to a parade of the clergy. St. Basil's, having no iconostasis, is entirely without the possibility of this part of the action of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

Image and Likeness: The Icon

The principal form of liturgical art in the East is the icon. Icons speak in form, content and style of the transformation that takes place in human experience when it is touched by God's grace. Hence, icons are not depictions of scenes in sacred history or reminders of biblical revelation. They are living presence, "a vector of divine grace," as the church fathers were fond of saying. Icon painting is not concerned with depicting what is commonly seen in the world, but in changing the common vision, renewing it so that the share of all creation in the eternal is glimpsed.

Icons often strike the Western eye as primitive and naive. They challenge our way of seeing the world, our personal and fashionable "images" of sacred scenes and personages. This is intentional, part and parcel of the canons governing the preparation of icons. In Western easel painting well into this century it was customary to paint as the eye sees—light and perspective affecting size, shape, colour and degree of visibility. Sacred statuary common to Roman Catholic churches in recent history similarly depicts the human condition, filled with joy or sorrow—or, if the artist would have it, in merely a sentimental manner.

In the iconographic tradition, on the other hand, the viewer is a participant. The lines of perspective in the icon come to a point behind the viewer, suggesting that the viewer is part of what is depicted. Indeed, that is precisely the teaching of the church. All human beings participate in the realities depicted in the icon. All creation is invited to the moment of transfiguration shown in the icon.

There is no single source of light in icons. Light appears to illuminate from within. No shadow is cast. Just so, the divine light illumines all creation, calling its full reality into being, without shadow or darkness. Similarly, there are no roofs in the buildings shown in icons; this points to the unity between the heavenly kingdom and the transfigured content of the icon.

The transfigured life is not bound by time. By definition, it is free of the decay that characterizes historical existence. Christ and the saints live in the eternal presence. Thus, the image of the saint in an icon is not a portrait. Rather, it depicts the spiritual and physical reality, occurring in time, in history, in the individual. The person is essential. No symbol is allowed because the person is "the image and likeness of God." Yet, saints are not painted in the midst of the distorting vagaries of life, in the grip of a transient condition. The

eternal incarnate in their person is, in the end, their reality. That is what the icon claims.

The figures in classical Byzantine icons are shown in a stylized manner, not lifeless, but *deathless*, having been transfigured by divine love and freed of the vagaries of history. The soul is not redeemed without or outside the body. The total person has the fullness of life. *Theosis*, the process of deification, becoming as Christ is, refines the whole being of men, women and children.

The only church in this study with a full complement of icons is St. Josaphat's. St. Basil the Great parish has a few icons scattered about on banners, depictions in the Byzantine style in stained-glass windows and the central image of Christ behind the altar of the church. St. George's parish has used the icons from their former building on the new iconostasis, with lithographs of feast-day icons on the upper registers.

The highly personal and naturalistic portraiture of the feast-day icons and the saints in St. Josaphat's Cathedral fail entirely to speak of the transfiguration, the presence of the eternal in the person depicted. Consequently, the viewer gains no sense of the transcendent in this environment. Rather, it is as if one has been placed in a storybook world where the illustrator, not wanting the free play of the imagination, has depicted the characters so you almost recognize them from down the block. The sanctity of those depicted is marked by halos, not by the way they are presented, body and soul, as transfigured beings in the "image and likeness" of God. They are completely time-bound, completely given to the vagaries of history.

The primary function of the icon cannot operate in this setting. The St. Josaphat icons do not invite the viewer to the reality they portray. They do not call forth the pain and joy in the experience of the viewer, calling it forth to be understood in a new way in the light of divine love. St. Josaphat's has paintings of Bible stories. In no sense are they icons, vectors of the divine love flowing into the life of the faithful during the act of veneration.

The depiction of God the Father in the dome of St. Josaphat's is completely beyond anything known in the Eastern Christian iconographic tradition. The canons of iconography stress that the only "image" of God is the incarnation, the Christ. God the Father is never portrayed. And the St. Josaphat's depiction is stylized in a way that has nothing to do with the Creator of life who, the Gospel has repeatedly declared, "is love." The figure appears to be born out of a Jansenist piety, common in nineteenth-century Roman Catholicism (though a heresy), which equates the Creator of life with judgement and damnation. In the Christian East, judgement and damnation are what human beings accept when they refuse life. They are not acts of God's retribution.

The stained-glass windows in the cathedral vary from neo-Byzantine style depictions to those drawing heavily on recent holy-painting images in Roman Catholicism. For example, there is a depiction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in one of the windows, a common Roman Catholic devotional piety early in the century.

A mosaic of the triumphant Christ with arms raised in blessing against a backdrop of the cross is the centre piece in the church of St. Basil the Great. Stained-glass windows, in the neo-Byzantine style, of St. Basil and St. Josap hat flank the mosaic. The mosaic bears no resemblance to the iconographic tradition of the Christian East. It is similar in style to much church art produced for North American Roman Catholic churches after the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. This mosaic of Christ makes no attempt to be an icon, but stands squarely in the 1960s style of North American church decoration.

There are several Ukrainian Catholic processional banners in St. Basil's. The banners are obviously held in affection by the parish and have been retained for use in liturgical processions. Two of them have icons embroidered in the Byzantine style, quite in keeping with the Eastern Christian tradition.

St. Basil's has a number of lovely stained-glass windows in the ambulatory of the nave and in the porch. They are largely within the Byzantine iconographic style and portray a series of feast days, scenes from the life of St. Basil and St. Josaphat and the links with sacred history precious to the Ukrainian people. They are well done and, although stained glass is not a part of Eastern Christian iconographic tradition, they are in style and content the most faithful to the tradition. Of course, they cannot function as icons in this form and serve only a decorative and pedagogical purpose. What is in the mind of an educated clergy which uses the Western form of stained glass to exercise the iconographic tradition of the Christian East? Is it simply a matter of placating the "old" sensibilities, providing the "appearance" of the tradition in a context where it can do no harm precisely because

it cannot be used as an integral part of worship? One wonders.

The last image that demands attention at St. Basil's is the life-size crucifix between the two main doors through which one passes on exiting the church. It is a contemporary piece with a plaster corpus of Christ on a wooden cross. The crucifix stands squarely in the Roman Catholic tradition of church art, personal, naturalistic, an image of the suffering of Christ. It illustrates the passion and death of Christ and harks to a Roman Catholic piety. In no sense is it an icon.

The iconography currently used in St. George's will be replaced when the parish contracts an iconographer to do the interior of the church. The debate over what style of iconography will prevail has yet to be settled, although it seems fair to say that the norms applied will stand well within those outlined by the canons of iconography. An opportunity to develop a sacred space in which the full weight of the iconographic tradition comes to the aid of the faithful—inviting them into the presence of the holy—is on the horizon for the parish.

Conclusion

The Edmonton parishes of St. Josaphat's, St. Basil's and St. George's share the patrimony of the Eastern Christian tradition and the Ukrainian people. When the community immigrated to Canada, it came with a memory of how the church was to be built and decorated. It did not come with a properly educated clergy. Rather, the community had to accept the clergy that were available; thus, a range of influences and sensibilities were brought to bear on the development of church structures. Roman Catholic and Protestant aesthetic sensibilities were normal in Canada. They formed a part of the dominant culture. The aesthetic of the Eastern Christian tradition, though held in the collective memory, was no longer part and parcel of the culture in which the people lived, and thus was easily fractured. In many cases, the community adopted images from what was available in Canadian society—Roman Catholic and Protestant "holy paintings." It has taken seventy-five years for enclaves within the Ukrainian community to discover the riches within Byzantine Church architecture and iconographic tradition, to discover the riches of their ancestors. As this movement takes hold (and there are signs across Canada this is happening), the Byzantine tradition in building, iconography and worship will emerge as a call to return to one of the richest symbolic traditions Christianity has ever known.

Notes

1. For a complete discussion see Sophia Senuk, "Ukrainian Religious Communities in Canada," in *The Ukrainian Religious Experience: Tradition and the Canadian Cultural Context*, David J. Goa, ed. (Edmonton: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1989).
2. Orest F. Kupranec, OSBM, *St. Josaphat's Cathedral in Edmonton* (Edmonton: The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton, 1979).
3. R. Melnyk, OSBM, *St. Basil the Great Church* (Edmonton: St. Basil the Great Parish, 1967).
4. The historical information on this parish is drawn from interviews with Professor Andrij Hornjatkevyč and Father Volodymyr Tarnawsky, 14 September 1988.
5. Traditionalists have argued that the adoption of the "new calendar" is a break with the liturgical calendar and an accommodation with the commercial world. The calendar question has been a concern in virtually all Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic jurisdictions and occasionally has led to schism.
6. We have yet to have a solid study of this movement in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Two key figures representing the spectrum of the movement in this century are Alexander Schmemann and Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky.
7. Kupranec, *St. Josaphat's Cathedral in Edmonton*, 223–24.
8. Ibid., 225–26, 232–42.
9. There is a rich literature on the iconographic tradition from the art history and liturgical viewpoints. This paper is concerned solely with its liturgical use. For further reading see: Constantine Cavarnos, *Orthodox Iconography* (Belmont, Mass.: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1977); H.P. Gerhard, *The World of Icons* (London: John Murray, 1971); Constantine Kalokyris, *Orthodox Iconography* (Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1965); Leonid Ouspensky, *Theology of the Icon* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1978); Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1982); John Stuart, *Icons* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975).

10. The theoretical contributions to our understanding of temple as sacred space are in Mircea Eliade, *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1958); *The Sacred and Profane* (New York, N.Y.: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1959); Harold W. Turner, *From Temple to Meeting House: The Phenomenology and Theology of Places of Worship* (The Hague: Mouton Publishing, 1979). A consideration of the Eastern Church architecture can be found in David Buxton, *The Wooden Churches of Eastern Europe: An Introductory Survey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Richard Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (Baltimore, Md.: Penguin Books, 1965); William MacDonald, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (New York, N.Y.: George Braziller, 1979); the recent magnificent book by Rowland J. Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia, Architecture and Liturgy of Justinian's Great Church* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988); Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York, N.Y.: Harry N. Abrams, 1974).
11. Kupranec, *St. Josaphat's Cathedral in Edmonton*, 232.
12. Ibid., 232.
13. Ibid., 232–33.
14. Ibid., 223–24.
15. Melnyk, *St. Basil the Great Church*, 97–98.
16. Ibid., 116–17.
17. Professor Andrij Hornjatkevyč served on the artistic committee of St. George's Church. He is committed to the Byzantine revival movement current in Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic churches.

A Heritage Lost: The Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, 1927–1983

Stella Hryniuk

Résumé

Cet article décrit les circonstances entourant la construction, la fréquentation et la démolition d'une église catholique ukrainienne tout à fait particulière au Manitoba. Grâce aux registres de la paroisse, aux journaux et à la tradition orale, l'auteur retrace les efforts d'une collectivité de pionniers ukrainiens catholiques pour ériger et conserver une grande église à ossature de bois à Portage la Prairie, dans les années 1920. Sous la direction du révérend Phillip Ruh, les paroissiens de l'église de l'Assomption ont fourni gracieusement temps et matériaux pour bâtir une véritable «cathédrale des Prairies» de style byzantin.

Compte tenu de ces facteurs et des moyens limités dont ils disposaient, les paroissiens ont construit un bâtiment splendide, mais dont la structure était compromise par des vices de construction. L'enveloppe s'est détériorée au fil des ans, d'autant plus que l'entretien a été négligé. Dans les années 1970, il a été décidé de construire une nouvelle église. Étant donné que la municipalité exigeait un stationnement, que le gouvernement n'avait pas institué de politique adéquate pour préserver le patrimoine et que la paroisse et la communauté n'ont pas su reconnaître la valeur historique de l'église, un véritable monument a été détruit.

Abstract

This paper describes the circumstances surrounding the construction, lifetime and demolition of an unusual Manitoba Ukrainian Catholic church. Using parish records, newspapers and oral history resources, the author traces the steps taken by the Ukrainian Catholic pioneer community of Portage la Prairie in the 1920s to create and sustain a large frame church. The parishioners of the Church of the Assumption built an impressive Byzantine "prairie cathedral" under the supervision of the Reverend Phillip Ruh, relying on volunteer labour and resources. These factors and their limited means led to the construction of an edifice that was beautiful but structurally flawed. Deterioration of the shell occurred over the years, exacerbated by insufficient maintenance. In the 1970s the decision was made to build a new church. The city's demand for off-street parking, the Manitoba government's lack of an appropriate heritage-preservation policy, and the parish's and community's failure to appreciate the church's value as a historic monument all contributed to the destruction of a landmark.

On 4 September 1927, the cornerstone of the new Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Portage la Prairie was ceremoniously blessed at a service attended by many people, including the local MP and MLA. In his speech, the mayor of the city, W.H. Burns, thanked the parishioners "for the beautiful edifice they had erected at such sacrifice, which would be a memorial for all time."[1] Unfortunately, this promise was not to be fulfilled. On 2 March 1983, on what the *Ukrainian Voice* called "A Sad Day in the History of Manitoba's Ukrainians,"[2] the church that had been a landmark for over half a century was demolished.

In the Beginning

Drawn by the prospect of cheap land on the Prairies, Ukrainian peasants from the Austrian provinces of Galicia and Bukovyna began immigrating to Canada in large numbers in the mid-1890s. Not all settled on the land. Some chose to stay in Portage la Prairie, which just after the turn of the century was a thriving town of about 4,000 people served by the Canadian Pacific, Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific railways. Ukrainian men could find work in the railway yards and shops and in the small manufacturing and construction companies. Ukrainian immigrants settled in the north end of the town, close to the railway tracks, the foundry and the brickworks, where housing was cheap.[3]

Ukrainian Catholics built their first church between 1905 and 1907. It was a small frame structure 40 feet by 20 feet (12 m by 6 m), built with volunteer labour on land donated by one of them. At that time the community had only fifteen families, but it grew quickly, and the church soon became too small. Even though they were usually without a resident parish priest, the parishioners decided in early 1919 to start collecting money for the construction of a new church.[4] Consideration was given in 1920 to buying a church building from a Roman Catholic parish, but nothing came of this project.[5] After further delays, a twelve-man building committee was selected in April 1923. This committee, in the presence of Bishop Budka, the Ukrainian Catholic bishop for Canada, was shown some plans by a church builder, one Tycholis. They liked his design of the church at Keld, Manitoba, but a year later there was still only talk, this time of a church 72 feet by 20 feet (22 m by 6 m) that was to cost no more than $8,500.[6] Nevertheless, a plot on which to build appears to have been purchased in 1924,[7] and by early 1925 the building fund stood at $3,129.20.[8]

In August 1925 the parish's cantor, George Michalchyshyn, was elected to the executive committee of the parish council.[9] He began to play a leading role on the building committee, which appears to have been restructured at about the same time. It was probably shortly after this that Bishop Budka suggested to Michalchyshyn that the committee contact the Reverend Phillip Ruh, an Oblate priest who had embraced the Byzantine rite. Ruh was then just completing the first of his large prairie churches—later often called his "prairie cathedrals"—at Mountain Road, Manitoba. Father Ruh met with members of the parish, who told him, after some deliberation, that they wanted a wooden church capable of seating 200 people.[10]

So a momentous partnership was begun. Some construction materials were obtained in 1925, but "owing to circumstances it was not possible to commence building operations until 1926."[11] By this time the parish consisted of about a hundred families. Most of the heads of families were wage-earning employees of the railways, but their work was primarily seasonal; probably only fifteen or twenty had steady full-time work. By the time the construction of the new church began, some parishioners, alarmed by the delays, were asking to have their donations returned, while others had suspended their giving.[12] These were not happy omens. Nonetheless, about $4,000 was on hand when the building began.[13]

Living as they did on a "cash on the line" basis, the parishioners were initially heartened by information given them by Father Ruh. They would save money, he said, if they built the church themselves, as had been done at Mountain Road. They need only build when they had money; when they ran out of money, they could suspend building to raise more funds.[14] Clearly, this mode of operation could put the congregation into a precarious financial situation; it also could, and did, lead the builders into the temptation of using lower quality materials. For the success of the construction under these circumstances, much depended on community interest in the project, individual generosity and selflessness. Father Ruh and George Michalchyshyn set an example in selflessness by agreeing to have payment of their salaries deferred throughout the course of the church's construction; one of the carpenters, M. Sawchuk, later did likewise.[15]

There can be no doubt that the cost of the church, at over $25,000, greatly exceeded the congregation's expectations. To the $4,000 with which they began, they succeeded in adding a further $18,000 between 1926 and 1930. Fund-raising events took the form of bazaars, bake sales, teas, picnics, raffles and games of chance. Much of the money was raised by the parish's women's auxiliary, whose role was never properly acknowledged.[16] There were also, of course, individual donations, sometimes at critical moments, as when the lumber firm refused to supply further wood on credit; one of the parishioners, Kyrillo Stroch, sold his cow for $40 (to the great dismay of his wife) and gave the money to the church.[17] Despite all the collections, donations and sacrifices, there remained a debt of $2,320, mainly in the form of the deferred payments;

neither Ruh nor Michalchyshyn had been paid as of 1944, and it is doubtful if they ever received the money due them.[18]

Such problems, however, still lay far in the future when work began on the foundations of the new church. In the initial stages of construction, Father Ruh relied on himself and volunteer labour for the day-to-day work. The basement was dug using horses pulling "scrapes" to do the heaviest work; men, women and children hauled the earth away in wheelbarrows.[19] Ruh was tireless. Not himself a trained architect, he tried to make up what he lacked in expertise with enthusiasm, dedication and sheer hard work. "He was there every day, from early in the morning till late at night, doing everything, even breaking rock with a sledge hammer."[20]

Ruh did not yet have much experience in constructing buildings suitable for the climatic and soil conditions of Manitoba. But he had a good designer's eye. Under his supervision and with his eager participation the concrete for the basement foundations was poured, and the shell of the structure speedily began to rise. The lumber underpinnings were mostly 2 inches by 8 inches (5 cm by 20 cm), with some 2 inches by 10 inches (5 cm by 25 cm). Insufficient provision was made for ventilation. Construction of the walls, roof, towers, ceiling and windows was similarly flawed. Moreover, the best materials—the most expensive and most sturdy—were in the basement. As money became more of a problem, the building was constructed of increasingly inferior materials.[21]

As the full magnitude of the structure became apparent in early 1927, some parishioners became faint-hearted. "What does he think he's building, Rome?" they asked. Ruh was certainly building on a grand scale. Fearful of debt and other unknown consequences, some of the congregation deserted the parish—probably about thirty or forty of the hundred families who had started the project. Funding became even more of a problem. Rather than suspend building, the remaining parishioners steeled themselves to raise more money and complete the task before them. Pride, determination and the need for a new church (the older one having been demolished in 1926) spurred them on. "Volunteers came by the dozen; as long as you could hold a hammer and as long as you could see what you were doing with the saw, you had a job there—all voluntary. There wasn't a cent paid."[22]

By the summer of 1927 the roof was up. On 24 July two crosses were blessed and erected, with Father Ruh explaining the symbolism of the ceremony.[23] On 4 September the cornerstone was laid and blessed to denote the completion of the main work on the structure.[24] Although all the work on the interior remained to be done, and many details of the exterior too, the church was operational in 1927.[25]

Although the main structural work had been completed with the use of voluntary labour, two carpenters who had earlier worked with Father Ruh at Mountain Road were hired in June 1927. These *maistry* (masters) were to be paid $4.50 a day, and every member of the parish was to board them for three days each.[26] In 1928 a painter, Kyrylo Sych from Winnipeg, was hired to paint the interior and exterior of the church, at a total fee of $4,000. This large sum was evidently also to cover Sych's expenses, such as payments to his helpers and the costs of his materials.[27] Of course, there was continued reliance on volunteers. Because of the intricacies of the work, and probably because of financial problems, it was not until 1930 that the last details were completed. On 20 July 1930, on what the Portage newspaper termed a red-letter day for the Ukrainian Catholic parish, the final consecration service was held, with a pontifical mass celebrated by Bishop Ladyka, recently appointed Ukrainian Catholic bishop for Canada.[28]

Although the grand dimensions of the edifice were already apparent in 1927, and had then so impressed Mayor Burns, the completed church was even more striking. At its largest exterior dimensions, the edifice was 170 feet

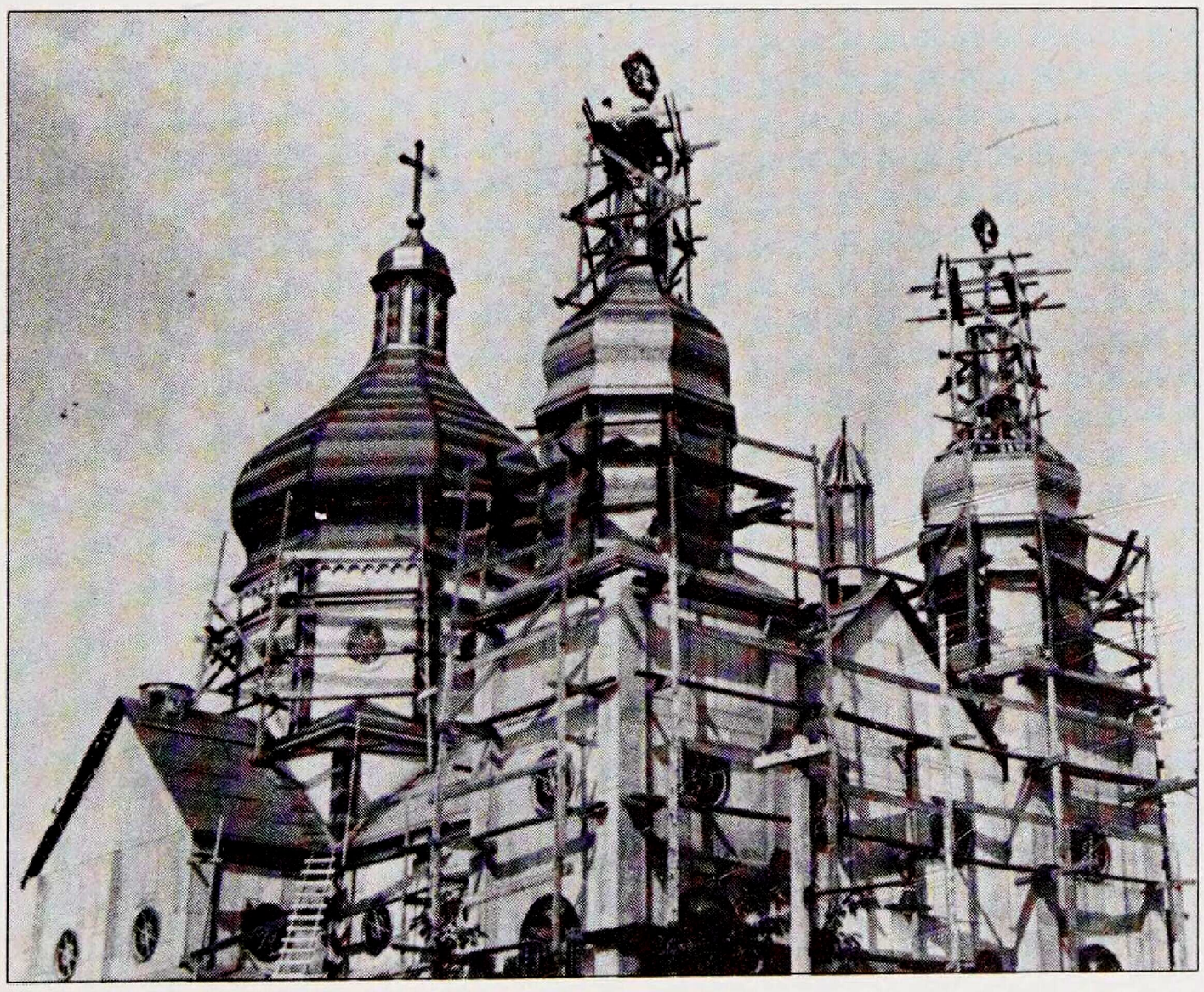


Fig. 1
Putting the finishing touches on the cupolas. Note the floral wreaths on the crosses. (Courtesy of Mrs. K. Kuzyk, Winnipeg)
▼

Fig. 2
The completed Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, c. 1936. (Courtesy of Mrs. K. Kuzyk, Winnipeg)
◀

long and 100 feet wide (52 m by 31 m) and attained a height of 104 feet (32m).[29] For its general architectural form, Ruh had relied on a cruciform plan, from which the walls climbed "uninhibitedly upwards ... to blend with the skyward reach of cupola and cross."[30] The wooden walls were covered with rough cast stucco,[31] which gave the church a pristine, glowing appearance. The roof was shingled. There was one main dome or cupola, two frontal towers, each with its own cupola, and four subsidiary, more stylized, cupolas. At the base of each cupola, large and small, were blind arcades. The many windows punctuated the exterior appearance with their striking shape and muted colour. The cupolas were covered in steel and topped by steel filigree Byzantine-style crosses. As was common in the Ukrainian tradition, a freestanding bell tower completed the external configuration. Until the time of its demolition, the church's "green and silver domed spires dominate[d] the town's

Fig. 3
The interior of the church, facing the altar and showing the archways and columns in the nave. (Courtesy of Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation)

▶

horizon."[32] In the words of another writer, "The structure does tower over the cultural enclave of the Portage la Prairie Ukrainian community."[33]

As with all his larger churches, "Ruh combined precepts and elements from Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic, Ukrainian Baroque, and vernacular" architecture.[34] Even though there was no iconostasis, and there were some religious statues and other Western influences, the interior of the church marked it clearly as a Ukrainian church. Its striking visual impact was due to the scope and skill of Ruh's design, the ingenuity and craftsmanship of the carpenters in their use of inferior materials and the general impression created by Kyrylo Sych's work, even though in its detail it was far from flawless.[35]

Upon entering the church, one stepped into the *babynetz*, the porch, which was largely unadorned, with doors leading into the nave and steps going up to the two choir lofts, one above the other. Central double doors led into the main body of the church. The first impression given by the tall, barrel-vaulted interior was one of grandeur, balance and harmony, an effect created by the combination of light, colour, height, space and ornamentation. Although the fullness of the crowning feature of the church—the central dome over the crossing of nave and transepts—was not immediately visible, the viewers's attention was immediately drawn to this intersection, and beyond it, 110 feet (34 m) away, to the altar, and also to features above eye level. Both side wings of the nave were framed in arches reaching to the ceiling. On the walls were a profusion of religious paintings,[36] placed at three levels and encircling the church in an orderly, harmonious pattern. At floor level there were also one-storey-high arcades or aisles along the east and west walls, which opened through colonnaded archways into the nave.[37] Columns supporting the upper walls extended above the arches to the vaulted ceiling and were also used at the crossing and in the sanctuary.[38]

The focal point of the interior was the main dome. It opened majestically out of the meeting of the arms of the cross. Here, the impression of spaciousness, of reaching heavenward,[39] was strongest. The dome was adorned with a row of religious paintings above a blind arcade. From the dome's centre hung a chandelier.[40] The semi-circular sanctuary, where the altar stood, was a fitting complement to the architecture of the nave, transepts and dome. The ceiling of the sanctuary curved inward toward the dome, its semi-circular shape accented by the six curved columns or ribs, like those of a great umbrella, enveloping the entire area of the altar.

The architectural effect of space was magnified by the interior decoration; a guidebook to Portage could validly describe "the richly coloured interior" as "the highlight

of the church."[41] The columns and arches throughout the church were painted to resemble marble. Whether done by Sych or one of his helpers, the trompe l'œil was remarkably successful, and lent the church the pomp of real marble.[42] The profusion of religious art on the walls further enhanced the splendour of the interior, so that it could without exaggeration be called "a celebration of the mural artist's craft."[43] An appropriate setting for the more than fifty murals was created by Ruh's design, including the placement of the windows as sources of light. There were large windows on the first floor level, and round windows above every arch in the nave, in the transepts and in the sanctuary, and in each wall of the hexagonal main dome.

In content, the fifty-six paintings were typical of Eastern Christian icons, although the style of painting was decidedly influenced by Western religious art and by Sych's own untutored skill and craft. The paintings were on canvas glued to the walls. Stencilled borders of geometric, Ukrainian-style motifs hid the irregular cut of the canvas. Even though most of the paintings were not icons in the strict sense, their large number, placement and general iconography were a clear transference of the Byzantine tradition of the parishioners. The paintings reiterated, according to one art historian, "the symbolic meaning of transcendence."[44]

Fig. 4
The interior of the church, showing the main entrance, the two choir lofts and religious paintings at two levels. (Courtesy of Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation)
◀

End without Honour

The church had been lovingly built and elaborately decorated. But the materials used for the roofing and exterior finish were of poor quality. Over the years the roof leaked, causing water to collect in the walls. The walls were not properly insulated and prepared for the stucco; they became damp and loose pieces of stucco came away or crumbled as early as the 1930s.[45] Minutes of parish meetings in the late 1930s and throughout the forties and fifties show that the need for repairs to the exterior was frequently under discussion. However, a meeting in 1938 specifically to discuss repairs to the church attracted few members, "because they aren't interested in church matters." That same meeting considered what type of siding should be used to cover the walls, and some pledges of money were received,[46] but it was not until 1942 that the decisions were made to use Insulbrick and to hire a contractor at fifty cents an hour.[47] The external appearance of the church was greatly changed as a consequence. Roofing repairs were approved in 1942 and discussed again in 1949, but it was apparently not until 1965 that a complete re-roofing was done.[48] Minutes in early 1950 noted there was rot under the church, the ventilation needed improvement and some joists needed fixing.[49]

Severe deterioration took place in many parts of the structure, assisted by procrastination in carrying out repairs. And what was done with the best of intentions occasionally had detrimental effects. The Insulbrick applied to the exterior walls exacerbated the deterioration of the walls because its waterproof tar composition trapped the condensed moisture from the warm air inside the church.[50] Only the murals inside the church were spared the damage caused by condensation, roof leaks and marked temperature changes.

The condition of the church caused increasing concern among the congregation. An architect, N.M. Zunic, estimated in 1971 that the cost of restoration might range between $49,000 and $130,000.[51] The following year a contractor gave an estimate. In 1974 the provincial Department of Cultural Affairs and Historical Resources was asked by the parish to examine the building. The department's restoration architect and interior designer noted many defects, some of them serious.

Fig. 5
Demolition—the last moments of the old church, 2 March 1983. (Courtesy of Daily Graphic, *Portage la Prairie, Manitoba)*
►

They were careful to suggest that only a thorough study by structural engineers could provide definitive answers to many questions. They thought the building could be completely restored if the congregation so chose, though this would be more costly than the erection of a new building.[52]

No such thorough structural examination appears to have been made. Instead, the congregation opted for a new church, which was built in 1981–82. The parish meanwhile considered what to do with the old building. Subsequently, they claimed they really had no choice: permission to build the new church

had been given on condition that there be ample off-street parking, which could only be provided if the old church was demolished and the site turned into a parking lot. In the fall of 1982 the parish decided to tear down the old church. The Manitoba Historical Sites Advisory Board then initiated a review to determine whether the church should be designated a historic site. Such designation would have enabled the Manitoba government to intervene. To enable the review to be completed, the Portage city council extended its deadline for clearing the site to 1 June 1983.[53]

The parish, perhaps alarmed by increasing publicity, pressed on with its own agenda. During February 1983 the parish priest, Rev. J. Radkewycz, authorized and assisted the parishioners to remove thirty or more murals from the walls,[54] which was done in a crude and unprofessional manner. This action effectively thwarted any possibility that the church might have been designated a historic site: as the chairman of the Historic Sites Advisory Board noted, the artifacts that had been removed had constituted one of the main reasons for the building's preservation.[55] Despite mounting media attention in Portage and elsewhere,[56] there was not sufficient local will to save the church. At 8:00 A.M. on 2 March 1983, the old church fell to the wrecker.

A Goodly Heritage

For over fifty years the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was the place of worship and the core of cultural and social life of Ukrainian Catholics in Portage la Prairie. During the depression years the congregation did what they could to maintain and even improve it. But they had insufficient knowledge of the building's structural details, how to maintain such a large wooden edifice and how best to repair any faults therein.[57] The historian might say the thrift-conscious parishioners adopted a Band-Aid approach to the maintenance of their church. This is not surprising, especially given the reluctance of the parishioners until the early 1970s to look for advice outside their own ranks.[58] It was not insensitivity to the historical worth of the church but lack of knowledge of what to do about its structural problems that brought it to its sad state of disrepair by around 1970. Considerations of safety then spurred the parish council to investigate more aggressively the extent of the deterioration. Restoration remained an option, but at high cost, and no structural engineer ever examined the building. Nonetheless, the decision was taken to build a new church.

One must presume the decision was not easily made. The church *was* in poor condition. Its full restoration represented a cost of unknown dimensions, against the known cost of building a new structure. Moreover, the old church, despite its beauty and its meaning in the lives of those who had taken a role in its construction (and perhaps of their immediate families), was relatively expensive to maintain. Given its mass, it could not be adequately heated in winter; indeed since the mid-1960s, the parish hall and not the church had been used for winter services. Pragmatic considerations argued for the construction of a new church.

Even some of those who had assisted in the construction of the old church were resigned to its demolition. "A time comes and things pass" was the sad comment of one. In any case, there were fewer and fewer of these parishioners, for many had died and others had moved away. Perhaps the old church was not as meaningful to the children and grandchildren, who had received it, so to speak, as a gift, as it had been to the generation that had struggled and sacrificed to build it. Perhaps it had still less meaning for those who had moved into the parish after the Second World War. Possibly some of the younger and upwardly mobile people of the 1970s were some-what ashamed of the cheap materials, which had been so marvellously fashioned and shaped by the craftsmen.

Such reasoning is obviously speculative. What is plain, however, is that while the new church was being planned and then built, no clear decision had been made about what to do with the old building.[59] Perhaps some members of the congregation thought the construc-tion of the new church ipso facto meant the old one would be torn down. A small number of parishioners did want to save it, or at least to find out "whether or not restoration would be possible for a summer-type church-museum."[60] As the author of a circular letter to parishioners put it so poignantly, "We inherited this building from the generation preceding us, so it is not really ours to do away with indiscriminately. We have an obligation to pass it on to the next generation, if at all possible. It is our most visible link with those immigrants who toiled with their own hands to build this magnificent building."[61]

Unfortunately, all too few parishioners shared this viewpoint. Possibly it was again their pragmatism that triumphed. Restoration

and continuing maintenance involved money. Why preserve something for which a modern and more comfortable replacement had been built? If the old church remained, how could the parish meet the city's requirement to provide off-street parking? It owned no other land and had no funds to buy any.[62]

In all of this one may discern an insufficient appreciation of the old, of the historically valuable, of the visible symbols of heritage—an attitude regrettably not uncommon in many parts of North America. It is certainly not an attitude only of the Ukrainian parishioners of Portage la Prairie. Indeed, one of the disconcerting aspects in the circumstances surrounding the demolition of the old church was the apparent indifference of the non-Ukrainian population to the imminent disappearance of a city landmark. The church, after all, was a historic site for all "Portagers," not for just the church members. "But some people have a sense of history and some don't."[63]

The latter seem to predominate, at least unless one level of government or another steps in to pay the bills. Parish officials claimed in 1982–83 that they had earlier requested assistance from the federal and provincial governments and had received no satisfactory response.[64] The province of Manitoba has no great record in protecting "the physical reminders of our past."[65] The federal government has taken a greater interest, though much of it was directed to preserving "a lot of anachronistic old forts."[66] It is notable that of the seventy-two national historic parks and major sites listed in 1985, three commemorate Indian or Métis people and all the others are memorials to the British or French "founding nations."[67] The British and French are an important part, but not the only part, of Canada's historic heritage. One hopes the contributions and heritage buildings of Canada's other component peoples will also get federal government recognition and support.

Such assistance cannot come too soon. In Manitoba, the Ukrainian Catholic church in Brandon appears to be under threat; its current priest is the same man who was the priest in Portage la Prairie in the early eighties. And the Church of the Resurrection in Dauphin, the best remaining example of Father Ruh's larger churches in Manitoba and a local landmark for fifty years,[68] is under imminent threat from a congregation that wants a larger church. Will these historic churches go the same way as the Portage church, where, to quote Joni Mitchell, "they paved paradise and put up a parking lot"?

Notes

1. *Daily Graphic*, Portage la Prairie, 6 September 1927. Because it conforms to modern usage, I have used the term "Ukrainian Catholic" throughout, even though the term "Greek Catholic" was in general usage for much of the century.
2. *Ukrainian Voice*, Winnipeg, 7 March 1983.
3. A.M. Collier, *A History of Portage la Prairie and Surrounding District* (n.p., n.d. [Portage la Prairie: 1970?]), pp. 84, 88–89; E.G. Krahn, "Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary," (Report, Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Culture and Heritage, Province of Manitoba, Winnipeg, January 1983), p. 1.
4. Portage la Prairie Church, Protocols of Parish Meetings 1917–1950 (hereafter Church *Minutes*), Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre Archives, Winnipeg, p. 8 (11 January 1919).
5. Church *Minutes*, p. 14 (3 March 1920).
6. Ibid., pp. 35–36 (29 April 1923), 38 (5 July 1923), 44 (12 June 1924).
7. *Weekly Manitoba Liberal*, Portage la Prairie, 24 February 1927.
8. Church *Minutes*, p. 46 (19 January 1925).
9. Ibid., p. 49 (30 August 1925).
10. Stella Hryniuk, "An Interview with Mr. Emil Michaels," Gazette Section, *Manitoba History*, no. 4 (Autumn 1982), pp. 22–23. Mr. Michaels thought the construction of the church was begun with digging the basement in 1925, and that the meeting with Ruh was in 1924 (ibid., p. 24); see also note 11.
11. The parish council petitioned the Portage city council in early 1927 for remission of taxes on the property for 1925 (*Weekly Manitoba Liberal*, 24 February 1927, from which the quotation is taken). City council secured an amendment to its act of incorporation to enable it to assent to this request (ibid., 19 April 1927). Possibly the basement hole was excavated in the fall of 1925, as suggested by Emil Michaels (see note 10) and another informant, Mrs. D. Pollock, interviewed 2 September 1988, but no above-ground construction began until the spring of 1926. See also Church *Minutes*, p. 56 (30 January 1927) for another reference to the building being begun in 1926.
12. Church *Minutes*, pp. 53–54 (4 April 1926).
13. Archives of the Ukrainian Catholic Archeparchy, Winnipeg (hereafter AUCA), Portage la Prairie parish files, Ruh to parish committee, 20 March 1944.

14. Taped comments by E. Michaels, Portage la Prairie, March 1986.
15. AUCA, Ruh to parish committee, 20 March 1944.
16. Ibid.; interview with Mrs. D. Pollock, Portage la Prairie, 2 September 1988; text of speech by D. Pollock, 21 August 1988; *Daily Graphic*, 25 July 1927; Hryniuk, "An Interview," pp. 24–25.
17. Ibid., p. 25.
18. AUCA, Ruh to parish committee, 20 March 1944.
19. Taped comments by E. Michaels, March 1986; interview with D. Pollock, 2 September 1988.
20. Interview with E. Michaels, 23 August 1988; see also Hryniuk, "An Interview," p. 24, and Rev. P. Ruh, *Missioner i Budivnychyi (Avtobiohrafia)* (Winnipeg: Progress Printing & Publishing Co., 1960), p. 17. The title means "Missionary and Builder," but was rendered into English as "Missionary and Architect."
21. Hryniuk, "An Interview," p. 24; interview with D. Pollock, 2 September 1988.
22. Hryniuk, "An Interview," p. 24; some volunteer workers had their parish membership dues of $5 p.a. waived.
23. *Daily Graphic*, 25 July 1927.
24. *Daily Graphic*, 6 September 1927.
25. Hryniuk, "An Interview," p. 24.
26. Church *Minutes*, p. 58 (27 June 1927). E. Michaels referred to four or five paid carpenters (Hryniuk, "An Interview," p. 24), so it is possible that others were added later.
27. Taped comments by E. Michaels, March 1986; interview with E. Michaels, 23 August 1988. Unlike the carpenters, Sych had to pay for his own board while in Portage.
28. *Daily Graphic*, 21 July 1930; D. Jakymeczko, "A Chronicle of the Ukrainian Catholic Parish of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary," in *A History of the Ukrainian Community of Portage la Prairie* (mimeographed, n.p., n.d. [Portage la Prairie: 1967?]), p. 3.
29. These measurements are derived from the 1982 drawing of the floor plan of the church by C. Tavares, reproduced in Krahn, "Ukrainian Catholic Church," plate VI. Another source, E.K. Le Sarge, "Architectural Landmarks: Two Byzantine Churches," *Beacon* (January/February 1983), pp. 29–34, gave its dimensions as 90 feet long by 72 feet wide, but these appear to have been interior measurements of the nave and the transepts narrowly defined.
30. Le Sarge, "Architectural Landmarks," p. 29; Krahn, "Ukrainian Catholic Church," p. 7.
31. Ibid.
32. G. Bannister, *Winnipeg Free Press*, 25 November 1982.
33. Krahn, "Ukrainian Catholic Church," p. 12.
34. *Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba: A Building Inventory,* (Winnipeg: Historic Resources Branch, Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, 1987), p. 35.
35. Perspective and anatomical detail were not always Sych's strong points. Informants have referred to him alternately as "Kyrylo" and "Pavlo"; there is some possibility of confusion between the major painter and his relative and helper. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Sych responsible for the murals liked his liquor; see Hryniuk, "An Interview," pp. 24, 26.
36. Although generally referred to in Portage as "icons," most of Sych's murals in the Portage church were too naturalistic to qualify properly for that term. They showed much Western influence and, in that respect, were stated to be "typical of church decoration during those years," S. Lada, Curator, Ukrainian Cultural and Education Centre, Winnipeg, to Rev. J. Radkewycz, Parish Priest of the Portage church, 2 November 1982.
37. For the use of such colonnades in early Byzantine architecture, see C. Mango, *Byzantine Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1976), p. 66.
38. There is a possibility that they were decorative rather than weight-bearing; see the unpublished report of 2 May 1974, by the Department Restoration Architect and Interior Designer, Department of Cultural Affairs and Historical Resources, Winnipeg, entitled "Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of the Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary: Report on the condition of the building structure," p. 9.
39. Le Sarge, "Architectural Landmarks," pp. 29–30.
40. The chandelier was not added until 1935, Church *Minutes*, p. 148 (overview of 1935).
41. *Early Architecture of Portage la Prairie* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Department of Cultural Affairs and Historical Resources, 1983), unpaginated (item no. 17).
42. The author has recently seen the marbling effect in the village church of Vals, Canton Graubunden, Switzerland; see also *Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba*, p. 45.
43. N. Einarson, unpublished paper of January 1983 entitled "Ukrainian Catholic Church in Manitoba," p. 5. Mr. Einarson was at that time chief historical architect in the Manitoba Department of Cultural Affairs and Historical Resources.
44. Le Sarge, "Architectural Landmarks," passim.
45. A photograph in the author's possession shows deterioration above the main portal even at the time of the church's consecration in 1930.
46. Church *Minutes*, p. 182 (31 July 1938).
47. Church *Minutes*, p. 233 (26 July 1942).
48. Church *Minutes*, pp. 233 (26 July 1942), 271–75 (29 May and 3 July 1949); Jakymeczko, "A Chronicle," p. 6.
49. Church *Minutes*, p. 283 (21 May 1950).
50. "Report on the condition of the building structure," pp. 6–8.
51. Le Sarge,"Architectural Landmarks," footnote 1.
52. "Report on the condition of the building structure," passim and especially p. 19.
53. Circular to fellow parish members by Mary Kohut, 29 September 1982; *Winnipeg Free Press*, 25 November and 7 December 1982; *Daily Graphic*, 1 March 1983.
54. *Bulletin* of the Portage church, 6 and 13 February 1983; *Daily Graphic*, 19 February 1983.
55. *Daily Graphic*, 1 March 1983.
56. *Winnipeg Free Press*, 18 February 1983; Edmonton Journal, 26 February 1983; and (too late) *Sunday Star*, Toronto, 6 March 1983.
57. Ukrainian Catholic settlers in Manitoba before the Second World War came predominantly

from areas where churches were built of stone.

58. To trust only members of the ethnic community was a not uncommon trait. There was much discussion at parish meetings before 1950 about whom to ask for advice, but except on one occasion when Father Ruh, then parish priest of Cooks Creek, Manitoba, was asked (Church *Minutes*, pp. 271–74 [29 May 1949]), the group always turned to someone known and close at hand.
59. Circular by Mary Kohut, 29 September 1982.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid.
62. W. Pollock, vice-president of the parish council, as reported in *Daily Graphic*, 19 February 1983.
63. Mary Kohut, as reported in *Daily Graphic*, 19 February 1983.
64. *Daily Graphic*, 19 February 1983.
65. Manitoba Culture Heritage and Recreation, *Heritage Resources, a Guide to the Heritage Resources Act of Manitoba* (n.p., n.d. [Winnipeg, 1985?]), p. 2.
66. B. Magner, "Why They Save What They Save," *Canadian Heritage*, 11, no. 2 (May–June 1985), p. 16.
67. Derived from the map and descriptions in ibid., pp. 20–21.
68. The church at Mountain Road, built just before that at Portage la Prairie, was probably Ruh's masterpiece. Unfortunately, it was destroyed by fire in 1966.

Draught Horses and Harnesses among Early Ukrainian Settlers in East-Central Alberta

PETER MELNYCKY

Résumé

Les chevaux de trait et tout l'équipement associé à ces animaux ont grandement influé sur la culture matérielle des colons ukrainiens qui, délaissant une agriculture de subsistance en Ukraine occidentale, se sont initiés à des méthodes d'agriculture commerciale à grande échelle dans l'ouest du Canada.

En Ukraine, au XIXe siècle, les animaux de trait, notamment les chevaux de trait, ne jouaient pas nécessairement un rôle de premier plan dans l'économie paysanne; d'ailleurs, on en trouve peu d'échos dans les traditions populaires, architecturales ou matérielles, de la paysannerie ukrainienne. C'est généralement en s'établissant au Canada que les fermiers ukrainiens ont acquis et développé les compétences nécessaires pour acheter, abriter, soigner les animaux de trait, qu'ils possédaient souvent en grand nombre, et en tirer profit. Bien que ces fermiers se servaient de matériel similaire mais de qualité différente en Ukraine, ils ont aussi adopté les types d'équipement pour chevaux que l'on utilisait au Canada.

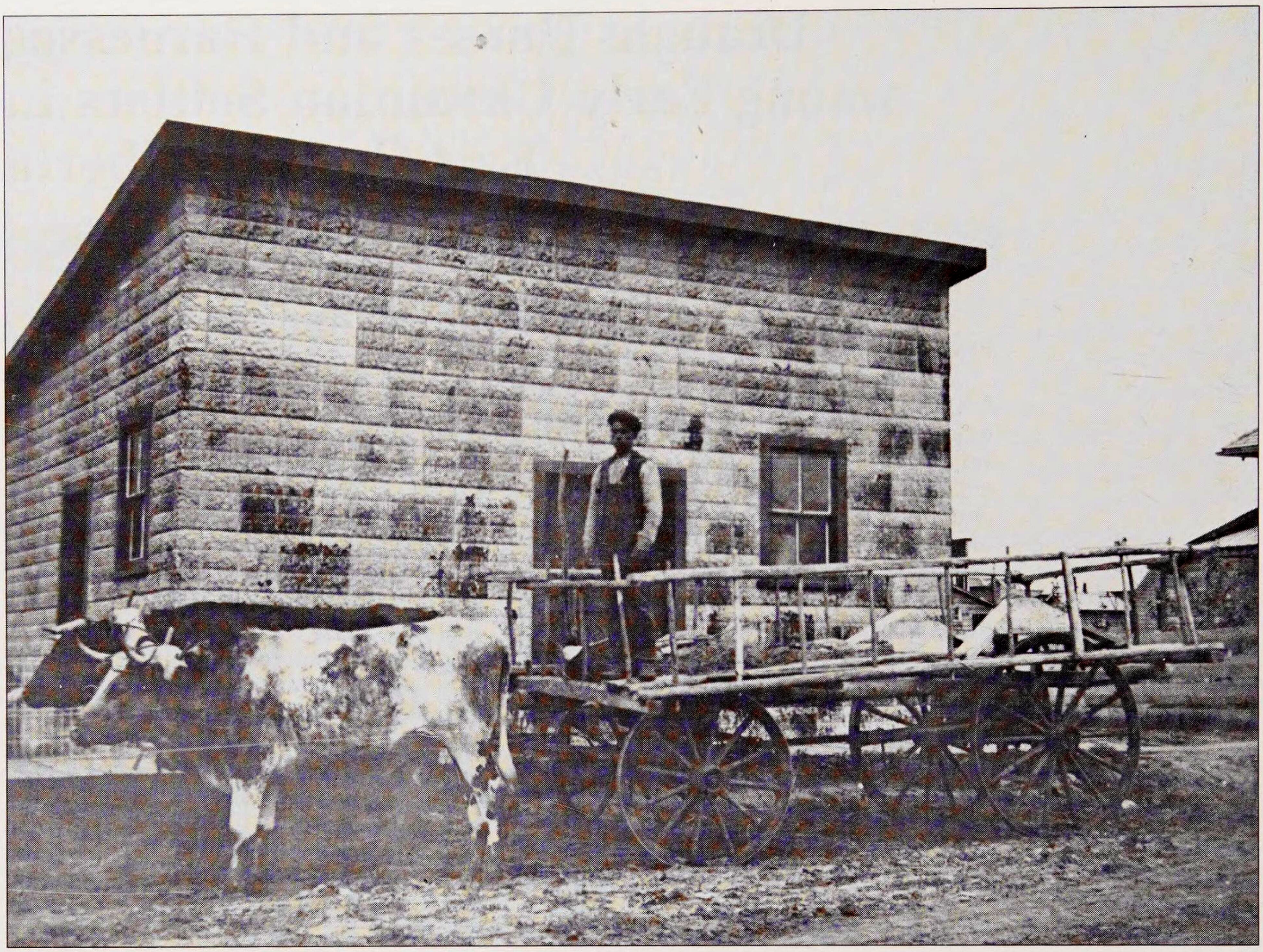
Abstract

Draught horses and their material requirements were a key aspect of the material culture adopted by Ukrainian settlers in their transition from the subsistence peasant farming of western Ukraine to the large-scale commercial farming of western Canada.

The role of draught animals, generally, and draught horses, specifically, in the peasant economy of nineteenth-century Ukraine was limited and had little effect on the structural and material folk traditions of the Ukrainian peasantry. Ukrainian homesteaders usually acquired and developed the skills pertaining to the purchase, housing, care and use of draught animals, especially in large numbers, in Canada. They also adjusted to a new variety of material accoutrements associated with the use and care of horses in Canada, although they had used similar items of different quality in Ukraine.

> For as long as people in the village could remember Ivan Didukh as a landholder, he had always owned only one horse and a small wagon with an oak shaft. He harnessed the horse on the left side and himself on the right. For the horse Ivan had leather traces and a breast collar. For himself he had a short rope trace. He didn't need a collar, as he could pull with his left arm (on the shaft) perhaps even better than with a collar.
>
> —Vasyl Stafanyk
> *The Stone Cross*

In his novella *The Stone Cross*, Galician Ukrainian author Vasyl Stefanyk offered a seminal depiction of the Ukrainian peasant agriculturalist within the Hapsburg empire just before the mass immigration to the Americas. Ivan Didukh,[1] Stefanyk's peasant prototype, is a farmer of more than average means, having his own horse and wagon and several parcels of land. The image, nevertheless, underscores the primitive state of agricultural development and technology amongst the Ukrainian peasants who were to emigrate from western Ukrainian lands and homestead in the bloc settlement areas of east-



▲ ***Fig. 1***
Ukrainian settler with oxen and wagon in east-central Alberta, no date. (Courtesy of the United Church of Canada Archives)

central Alberta. More importantly for this study, Stefanyk gave a graphic depiction of the limited and primitive role of the horse in the peasant agricultural economy.

The role of draught animals generally and draught horses specifically in the peasant economy of nineteenth-century western-Ukrainian ethnographic territory was limited in scope and had minimal effects on the structural and material folk traditions of the Ukrainian peasantry. Although equine culture was more pronounced in the mountainous (Lemko and Hutsul) Ukrainian regions, the animals bred there were not of the draught variety, nor was their function comparable with the central role of horses working the land and conveying produce and goods in western Canada.

By and large, Ukrainian homesteaders acquired and developed the skills pertaining to the purchase, housing, care and use of draught animals, especially in large numbers, in Canada. They also adjusted to a new variety of material accoutrements associated with the use and care of horses in Canada, although they had used equivalent items of different quality in Ukrainian lands. In the mountainous regions of western Ukraine, animal husbandry has always been a more important aspect of the folk economy than agriculture.[2] In the lands of eastern Galicia, whence came most Ukrainian peasants who immigrated to Canada at the turn of the century, few could afford the luxury of horses for draught purposes. Landholdings in the western Ukrainian territories of the Austro-Hungarian empire were small in size and widely dispersed. By 1902, over seventy-five per cent of peasant holdings measured less than five hectares (roughly twelve acres). Of these holdings, over half consisted of less than two hectares (five acres).[3] The peasants held property in large numbers of narrow strips of land, usually quite distant from dwellings

and at times kilometres apart from each other. The strips were often only a few metres wide, extending for kilometres.[4]

The arrangement of land holdings made agricultural efficiency practically impossible. Because of the scattered nature of land holdings, farmers preferred ploughing with horses to using the slower oxen, yet few could afford their own horses. The small size of the average holding did not warrant nor permit the possession of horses. Horses for ploughing had to be hired at considerable expense.[5]

Horses bred within the Ukrainian ethnographic territories of eastern Galicia fell into three general categories. The better-class riding horses were used for pleasure and for army-cavalry service. State stud farms, large landowners and, in some cases, smaller landowners and prosperous peasants bred them from native stock modified with imported English and Oriental strains.[6]

In the second category was the mountain pony indigenous to the Hutsul and Lemko regions. Distinguished by its predominantly black colour, heavy neck, and luxurious mane and tail, the Hutsul horse had a reputation for extraordinary endurance, quickness, dependability and beauty.[7]

The third type of horse to be found in western Ukrainian territories was the ordinary draught animal most commonly associated with the peasant farm economy. It has been characterized as "eine Abart von Pferden"[8] and "a lifeless creature with thick legs, a tough, usually brown, hide and a long mane which is forever tangled for lack of care."[9] Of mixed breed, this horse was scorned as a "degenerate type" ruined by being worked too young, yet it was nevertheless enduring, hardy and well adapted to a myriad of hard work and all kinds of abuse:[10]

> The miserable animals that are roped to them [wagons], puny, hungry-looking and often vicious wretches, may not deserve the name of horse. They are, however, full of grit and sure-footed....These horses are mares, as a rule, and the foals run free behind or in front of their mothers.[11]

Western-Ukrainian farmers used harnesses of the simplest construction, consisting almost entirely of homemade ropes. Only the wealthy could afford the luxury of a leather bridle, not to speak of an entire set of leather harnesses.[12] Like other domestic and farmstead items, harness was primarily handmade and unchanged in design and function for decades, if not centuries. According to J.G. Kohl's 1842 chronicle of travel through Bukovyna and Galicia,

> the Rusniak peasant, like those of Little Russia, makes all his furniture and household utensils himself: he is his own architect, carpenter, coachmaker, and shoemaker.... The inhabitants of the country watered by the San [River] have been little influenced by modern improvements. In their domestic arrangements and accommodations, there is scarcely a trace of any reform. On the contrary, the shape and material of everything, proves how ancient are all their usages. They hollow their boats, and cut their beehives, carts, and ploughs, in the same way probably as their forefathers did more than a thousand years ago. Everything, down to the smallest price of harness on their horses, to the most trifling hem and border on their clothes, has remained for ages unchanged.[13]

Natives of the Carpathian mountain regions outfitted pack and saddle horses with cloth underlay pads woven from goat's hair, and fastened a homemade wooden saddle (*tarnytsia*) tightly over them with a flaxen rope girth. They then covered the saddle with a soft pad (*prysidka*) fastened into place with straps and secured the head of the horse by a leather bridle with an iron bit or rope halter without mouthpiece.[14] A horse fancier from the British Isles who travelled through the Ukrainian mountain region in the late 1800s found her English riding gear of little use.

> The village had gathered that I cared for horses, and sometimes as many as five would be tied up near the cart shed in the yard for me to choose from. Saddles were more difficult to find: my own, totally unsuited to the size of the beasts, I had given up, and doffed my skirt *sans gene* to bestride the comfortless wooden ones, whose stirrups, hung on by knotted ropes of unequal length, were made of the plastic willow.[15]

In contrast to their Austro-Hungarian experience, Ukrainian peasant farmers who immigrated to western Canada discovered horses were an integral part of their operations. Horses were central to the settlement and development of the Canadian West, pulling settlers' wagons and homesteaders' ploughs; hauling passengers, mail and supplies; working cow stock; transporting children to school; working the grain fields; hauling wheat to elevators; and more. The horse provided the power of the agricultural community until it was supplanted first by the steam engine and later by the gas tractor.[16] It was only a matter of time before the horse dominated the work on the farms of Ukrainian settlers as well. Most Ukrainian settlers in east-central Alberta started working their homesteads with oxen before progressing to more efficient horses. Ukrainians were

familiar with oxen in Europe, and managed their harnessing along familiar lines, with special harnesses, yokes or collars.[17] Oxen were cheaper to acquire and available in greater number. Although they tended to be slow, sulky and at times disoriented, oxen held the advantage of being able to live on rations of grass readily available from uncultivated land. Scarcer and expensive horses, on the other hand, required a grain diet to supplement grass feeding.[18]

Ukrainian settlers demonstrated a basic lack of familiarity with the standard of horse found in Canada. Dr. Joseph Oleskow, an agronomist who visited Canada in 1895 and later promoted it as a destination for Ukrainian immigration, commented on the type of horse typically found on Canadian farms and the skills needed to work these harnessed horses in their various chores.

> Skinny miserable nags would not be able to pull these machines, hence one needs good horses for it. Farmers in Canada have, therefore, horses differing markedly from those commonly owned by our peasants, differing even from the horses of our Germans, and it would take us a long time to find in our country horses of the kind owned by farmers in Canada. Harnesses made of cloth are not strong enough for operating these machines and must be made of leather. It requires experience to know how to deal with this kind of horse and harness and with the agricultural machines and those who lack this experience are completely ignorant in farming according to the local standards.... Those who know in advance or who learn while still at home to operate the agricultural machines and to handle the big vigorous horses and leather harnesses owned by rich landowners in our country will be far ahead of those who emigrate to Canada unprepared.[19]

Although most Ukrainian settlers in east-central Alberta could not allow themselves horses in the initial stages of their settlement, increasing numbers did so within a short period of time as they stabilized their economic situation. Most did not begin with purebred draught horses or matched teams, but purchased half wild broncos (*dykuny*), "Indian ponies" (*kaiusy*) brought in from the ranges or mixed-breed horses, which might have had Percheron, Clydesdale or Belgian blood.[20] Dominion Colonization Agent C.W. Speers, reporting on conditions in the Edna colony in the fall of 1898, described the Ukrainian immigrants' first encounters with Canadian range ponies:

> These people have quite a lot of stock, and have made ample provision for them, as large quantities of hay have been put up, and they are good caretakers and feeders. But in many cases, later arrivals have purchased small ponies that are practically useless and are retarding their progress. These ponies run off when allowed their freedom and when the Bukowinian is not looking on the prairies to find them he is running round with them. This is a mistake that a few of them are making, and I have pointed out and invariably impress our Agents to ward off the Broncho dealer and advise these people in their interests. But in many cases some have preferred to use their own judgement against the best advice that could be given. This more directly applies to the late arrivals of the Bukowinian class.[21]

In general, the most common type of horse found in Alberta between 1900 and 1920 was a tamed variety of mustang that was neither fine boned nor delicate in appearance, but rather coarse and stocky. The average horse measured about fifteen hands (60 inches) from the ground to the shoulder. Some pure Clydesdale and Percheron varieties were used for heavy work, but distinguishable breeds were not common at the time.[22] As Ukrainian farmers became aware of the benefits of owning good horse stock, the quality of their animals improved. By 1915, Robert Fletcher, Alberta Supervisor of Schools, was able to report a "very marked improvement" in horse stock among Ukrainian settlers: "Strong heavy work horses from Percheron or Clyde sires have displaced the cayuse, and the horses invariably show good keep."[23]

By 1921 the average western farm included about ten horses.[24] According to a study of Ukrainian communities in western Canada conducted by J.S. Woodsworth in 1917, it would appear that Ukrainian settlers in east-central Alberta were not far behind that average. Of eighty-seven Ukrainian families surveyed in the Lamont district, only one had no horses, sixty-one had up to ten horses and twenty-three had more than ten horses, for a total of 716 horses. Indeed, one family owned fifty horses and another thirty-seven.[25] In the Chipman district, 101 families owned a total of 779 horses. Six families had neither horses nor oxen, three had only oxen, thirty-one kept between ten and twenty-one horses, while one family had fifty-nine horses.[26] All thirty-one families surveyed in the Mundare area had at least three horses, and one-quarter of the families had more than ten horses, for a total of 299 horses.[27]

The Woodsworth report noted (perhaps unfairly in the first instance) that Ukrainian settlers, who were "absolutely" indifferent to the quality of their other stock, were generally

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Fig. 2
"Galician Sleigh" with horses at "Galician Hay Market" in Edmonton, 1903. (Courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Alberta, E. Brown Collection, B.5583

careful of their horses and tried to maintain good stock.[28] This improvement was in part due to the emphasis put on owning and breeding good horse stock by the Ukrainian press in Canada. The 1912 *Kanadyiski Farmer* (*Canadian Farmer*) annual calendar translated into Ukrainian an article by G.B. Rothwell (Dominion Horse Breeder) entitled "Tiahlovi koni u Kanadi" (Draft Horses in Canada).[29] In the 1930 *Farma* (*Farm*) almanac, an article entitled "'Dobryi kin'" (A Good Horse), by a Ukrainian agriculture student, outlined the essential qualities of good horse stock.[30] The 1929 calendar *Klenovyi lystok* (*The Maple Leaf*) carried an article by T. Bodnar, a Dominion agent for the promotion of better breeding of domestic animals, entitled "Hospodarski koni" (Farm Horses), in which he underlined the value of strong and efficient horses to Ukrainian farmers in Canada:

> Belgian farmers, French farmers, German and English farmers breed fine horses. Let Ukrainian farmers not be left behind the farmers of other nations. A farmer needs to think about and improve the methods of managing his farm. He must be mindful that the land be carefully cultivated and that farm animals be of the highest quality. Fine cows, good horses, good sheep. The better the breed of domestic animals, the more benefit they will bring their owner.[31]

In Canada, Ukrainian immigrants initially replicated the rough, handmade harnesses they had used in Europe. These early harnesses were made largely of rope, cloth padding and leather and were simple in design and construction, without belly bands, back breeching, hip pads, straps, hames or shoulder collars. Each consisted of a simple and loosely fitted breast collar and two traces or tugs leading back to the vehicle being pulled. The heads of the horses were equipped with simple rope halters without mouthpieces. Eli Tkachuk described the earliest harness his father fashioned for their first team of oxen near Whitford:

> The harness was homemade. He packed farmers' cotton bags with straw and sewed them together to form the collars; heavy ropes formed the tugs while sacks were the back bands and ropes held the harness under the bellies. The gear worked quite well, considering all the work he had for the animals at that time. Later, of course, better equipment could be bought.[32]

Dr. Joseph Oleskow commented on the suitability of Ukrainian farm harness standards for the Canadian frontier:

> Harnesses made of cloth are not strong enough for operating these machines (harvesting machines) and must be made of leather. It requires experience to know how to deal with these kinds of horses and

> harness and with the agricultural machines and those who lack this experience, are completely ignorant in farming according to the local standards....Our man can easily harness a horse if the harness is made of cloth, but it is profound philosophy to him to use a Canadian harness, a philosophy he cannot master. He can drive the half-starved Galician hags with an equal ease, but cannot manage the heavy Canadian horses. Our farmer sits down on the driver's seat, hangs his head and, deep in thought, lets the reins dangle, while the strong Canadian horses, used to a wilful farmer's hand, run around as they like.[33]

In his memoirs, Peter Svarich related the frustration early settlers experienced when dealing with Canadian harness for the first time:

> Before long the German delivered the horses. We harnessed them immediately to the new wagon and took them in hand for a try. Everything worked excellently except that we were terrified by the sight of the complicated and tangled harness which we could neither put on or take off. There were too many of those buckles and belts so that we didn't know which to unfasten and which to leave in place. Eventually we learned how to handle the harness, but more than one poor fellow had his problems.[34]

Although Ukrainian settlers in Canada initially found it difficult to understand and manipulate the heavy harnesses that were required and prevalent in the country, by the late 1920s and early 1930s they were on a par with their neighbours. No doubt much of this progress came from simply mimicking the farming techniques of their neighbours. At the same time, the Ukrainian-language press in Canada instructed its readers on the proper selection, use and care of harness for horses on the farm. During 1929, *Farmerske zhyttia* (*Farmer's Life*) published a series of articles on the care of farm horses, which in part dealt with training colts properly to wear farm harness and pull farm implements.[35] The 1930 issue of the *Farma* (*Farm*) calendar included a short article by Vasyl Bodnar, a student of agriculture at the University of Manitoba, entitled "Upriazh" (Harness), which instructed readers on the importance of proper methods of caring for harness on the farm.[36]

Initially, Ukrainian farmers did not outfit their teams with the most complete sets of harness available, because of both the cost involved and the more spartan character of the traditional harness to which they were accustomed. Many would forgo the back harness of breeching, which allowed teams to back up vehicles or implements they were pulling and aided them in slowing down and stopping their loads. Without such a breeching harness a team had to rear back up into their collars with their necks to back up with a vehicle. Horses had to be trained in this manoeuvre, and those already accustomed to breeching found it a difficult transition.[37]

Horse harness was an essential tool in the operation of any farm site and could be obtained from a variety of sources. Many large towns had resident harness makers who met local needs. If harnesses were not bought directly from one of these local harness shops, farmers would either purchase them through retailers who distributed harnesses for a variety of manufacturers, or order them by mail from the respective companies. Eaton's, Sears, Marshall Wells, McLeod's and the Great West Saddlery Company were all important sources for harnesses.

Draught horses dominated the working of farms and the conveyance of farm produce until the First World War, after which steam engines and later steam and gas tractors became increasingly popular until they dominated after the mid-1930s.[38]

Long after the appearance of gas tractors and the predominant use of automobiles for personal transporation, horses continued to provide most of the power for tillage and general farm work. Only in 1946 did as many as half the farmers in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba own tractors.[39] During the 1920s the spread of tractors on farms was limited by "the lack of suitable support technology" independent of horses. For instance, there was no reliable farm truck to replace the horse-drawn grain wagon for conveying grain to rail-line elevators.[40] Freighting was more economical with horses. In 1926, only two per cent of prairie farmers reported truck ownership. The average horse in Alberta, even in 1930, cost only $41.[41]

With the settlement of Ukrainians in east-central Alberta came not only the transference of many aspects of that community's material culture, but also the adoption of totally new Canadian items. The draught horse and the accompanying material requirements of this animal demanded adjustments by Ukrainian settlers as a direct result of their location in the Canadian West. The initial acquisition of draught horses by Ukrainian settlers was a source of great pride to them. Photographs of family horses were common; the genealogy of subsequent generations of horses are often engrained in family memory nearly as accurately as the family history itself.[42] Draught horses were central to the critical early stage of Ukrainian settlement in Alberta.

Notes

1. Stefanyk's short story *Kaminny khrest* is the classic depicition of emigration in Ukrainian literature. See English translation *The Stone Cross* in D.S. Struk, *A Study of Vasyl Stefanyk: The Pain at the Heart of Existence* (Littleton: Ukrainian Academic Press, 1973), pp. 145-54. The piece was based on an actual Ukrainian peasant, Stefan Didukh, who immigrated to east-central Alberta. See Iuri Klynovyi, "Vasyl Stefanyk's Heroes in Reality," in *Ukrainian Quarterly* 28 (1972): 28–36, and "Diduck (Diduch), Stefan (1839-1911)," in Alberta Rose Historical Society, *Pride in Progress: Chipman–St. Michael–Star and Districts* (Chipman: Alberta Rose Historical Society, 1928), pp. 302-3.
2. Volodymr Kubijovyc, ed., *Ukraine: A Concise Encyclopedia*, vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), p. 291.
3. Samuel Koenig, "The Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia: A Study of Their Culture and Institutions," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1935), p. 122.
4. Ibid, p. 123.
5. Ibid, pp. 130–31.
6. Foreign Section of the Foreign Office, *Austrian Poland* (London: H.M. Stationary Office, 1920), p. 50.
7. D.A. Volkov, *Koniarsatvo* (Kyiv: Vydavnytstuo "Urozhai," 1971), pp. 126–27; Volodymr Shukhevych, *Hutsulshchyna* (Lviv: Naukove Tovarystvo im. Shevchenka, 1899), pp. 77-85; Koenig, "Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia," p. 141; Foreign Office, *Austrian Poland*, p. 51.
8. Koenig, "Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia," p. 229.
9. Ibid, p. 141.
10. Ibid.; Foreign Office, *Austrian Poland*, pp. 50-51.
11. George Raffalovich, "Where the Poplars Tremble (A Peace Idyll in Ukraine)," *Pearson's Magazine* December 1916.
12. Koenig, "Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia," p. 228.
13. J.G. Kohl, *Austria: Vienna, Prague, Hungary, Bohemia and the Danube: Galicia, Styria, Moravia, Bukovina, and the Military Frontier* (London: Chipman and Hall, 1844), pp. 434, 473.
14. Koenig, "Ukrainians of Eastern Galicia," pp. 228–29; Shukhevych, *Hutsulshchyna*, p. 252.
15. Menie Muriel Norman, *A Girl in the Karapathians* (London: George Philips and Son, 1892), p. 54.
16. Grant MacEwan, *Hoofprints and Hitching Posts* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1972), p. 4.
17. For more on the initial use of oxen by Ukrainians in Canada see "Koni," *Ukrainskyi holos*, 24 August 1910. The article favours the use of oxen over horses during the initial period of settlement as a stabilizing factor in the economic development of the settler.
18. Ibid.
19. Dr. Joseph Oleskow, *About Emigration* (Lviv: Publications of Michael Kachkowsky Society, 1895), pp. 21–22 (Provincial Archives of Alberta 73.560).
20. William Buryn, telephone interview with author, 22 April 1983; Mike Snaychuk, interview with author, 1 September 1983. The term "cayuse" is synonymous with "Indian pony" in northwestern United States and western Canada. The term derives from the Cayuse Indians of northeastern Oregon and became part of the lexicon of Ukrainians in western Canada. The Cayuse refined the art of horse training and breeding to the extent that individual tribesmen commonly owned fifteen horses, while some wealthier members owned up to 2,000 animals. During the 1800s, horses were traded by the Cayuse to whites in return for a variety of manufactured goods. See Barbara A. Leitch, *A Concise Dictionary of Indian Tribes of North America* (Algonac, Mich.: Reference Publications, Inc., 1979), pp. 83–84; and Carl Waldman, *Atlas of the North American Indian* (New York, N.Y.: Facts on File Publications, 1985), p. 56.
21. Vladimir J. Kaye, *Early Ukrainian Settlements in Canada, 1895–1900: Dr. Joef Oleskow's Role in the Settlement of the Canadian Northwest* (Toronto: Ukrainian Canadian Research Foundation, 1964), p. 348.
22. Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village Research File, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, Historic Sites Service, Anne Ryan, Grant MacEwan Community College.
23. James S. Woodsworth, "Ukrainian Rural Communities: Report of an Investigation by the Bureau of Social Research, Governments of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta" (Unpublished report, Winnipeg, 1917), p. 145.
24. MacEwan, *Hoofprints*, p. 77.
25. Woodsworth,"Ukrainian Rural Communities" p. 86.
26. Ibid, p. 82.
27. Ibid, p. 75.
28. Ibid, p. 114.
29. G.B. Rothwell, "Tiahlovi koni v Kanadi" in *Kaliendar Kanadyiskoho farmera* (Winnipeg, 1923), pp. 114–15.
30. Iosyf Vavrykiv, "'Dobryi kin'" in *Farma*, 1930, p. 85.
31. T. Bodnar, "Hospodarski koni," in *Klenovyi lystok*, 1929, p. 127.
32. Eli Tkachuk, "Eli and Dora (Nee Topechka) Tkachuk," in *Lac La Biche Yesterday and Today* (Lac La Biche: Lac La Biche Heritage Society, 1975), p. 65.
33. Oleskow, *About Emigration*, p. 21.
34. Petro Zvarych, *Spomyny, 1877–1904* (Winnipeg: Vydavnycha spilka "Tryzub," 1976), p. 109. For a similar narrative by a later Ukrainian immigrant at Vilna in 1928 see "Alex Beraza," in *Lac La Biche Yesterday and Today* (Lac La Biche: Lac La Biche Heritage Society, 1975), pp. 68–69.
35. *Farmerske zhyttia*, no. 43, 22 October to no. 51, 18 December 1929.
36. Vasyl Bodnar, "Upriazh" in *Farma*, 1930, p. 86.
37. Dan Boettcher, interview with the author, 2 November 1982.
38. See R.E. Ankli, H.D. Helesberg and J.H. Thompson, "The Adoption of the Gasoline Tractor in Western Canada," in Donald H. Akenson, ed., *Canadian Papers in Rural History* vol. 2 (Gananoque: Langdale Press, 1980), pp. 9–39. For a history of the

mechanization of Ukrainian farmsteads in east-central Alberta, see Peter Melnycky, "*Mashyna*: Ukrainians and Agricultural Technology in Alberta to 1930," in Manoly R. Lupul, ed., *Continuity and Change: The Cultural Life of Alberta's First Ukrainians* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, and Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, 1988), pp. 100–112.

39. Ibid, p. 10.
40. Ibid, p. 16.
41. Ibid. pp. 16, 25.
42. The research binders and reports of the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, Historic Sites Service, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, Edmonton, are replete with information on the integration of draught horses into the farmsteads and townsites of east-central Alberta. The following manuscripts and published reports are of particular relevance: Chrystia Chomiak, "The Makowichuk Stainia: Materials History" (Historic Sites Service, Alberta Culture, 1983); Marie Lesoway, "The Hawreliak House: A Materials History" (Historic Sites Service, Alberta Culture, 1983); Sonia Maryn, *The Chernochan Machine Shed: Ukrainian Farm Practices in East Central Alberta* (Edmonton: Alberta Culture, Historic Sites Service, 1985); Peter Melnycky, "The Radway Livery Barn: A Land Use and Structural History" (Historic Sites Service, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, 1983).

Ukrainian Peel Ovens in Western Canada

RADOMIR B. BILASH

Résumé

Pendant plusieurs décennies, les fours à sole fixe avaient beaucoup d'importance dans la vie des Ukrainiens de l'ouest du Canada. Les caractéristiques, les méthodes et les techniques traditionnelles liées à ces fours ont été adaptées aux nouvelles conditions de vie dans les Prairies. Vers les années 1960, les modèles intérieurs et extérieurs du four ukrainien à sole fixe étaient plus ou moins chose du passé. Récemment, on remarque un intérêt renouvelé et grandissant pour ce genre de four, dont la construction fait appel à la disponibilité de matériaux nouveaux, non traditionnels, utilisés de façon créatrice.

Abstract

Peel ovens played an important role in the life-style of Ukrainians in western Canada for several decades. Traditional features, methods and techniques were transplanted from the old country and adapted to new conditions on the Prairies. By the 1960s, both indoor and outdoor versions of the Ukrainian pich, *or peel oven, had largely fallen out of use. Recent, renewed interest in the* pich *continues to grow and innovative elements are introduced to take advantage of the availability of newer, non-traditional materials.*

When studying traditional Ukrainian folk architecture, domestic folk furnishings in the traditional Ukrainian home, daily life-style, folk ritual, or folk songs, it has always proven difficult to exclude any reference to the *pich*, or as it is more generally called, the peel oven. Thus in many ways, it can be looked upon as the "heart" of a home, providing a direct reflection of that home's inhabitants, their socio-economic status and cultural change. The peel oven was transported to the Canadian West with the Ukrainian immigrant and continued to play a role, however changing, in the life-style of Ukrainians in Canada well after they stopped being considered immigrants.

Development of the *Pich* in Ukraine

The origin of the peel oven has been attributed to the Romans.[1] Of course, being developed by the Romans, its proliferation was guaranteed for a time until the Roman Empire finally dissolved. While varying in materials of construction and dimensions, it is still possible to recognize the common features of these early ovens:

> The peel oven ... had one opening in the front. The fuel, usually wood, coke, coal, peat or lignite, was fed through this opening, ignited, and allowed to burn for hours. During this heating period, the front opening also served as the only stack. After the oven had reached the proper temperature, determined only by the eye and judgement of the master baker, the embers were raked out, and the oven was allowed to "lie down" for an hour or so to secure an even distribution of heat. At the end of this soaking period, the loaves were individually loaded into the oven by means of a long-handled wooden shovel called a "peel". This naturally meant that those loaves which were loaded first were the last to be unloaded. It can readily be seen that uniform loaf color, consistently the same on all loaves, was the exception rather than the rule.[2]

In eastern Europe, some form of peel oven was in use in homes as early as the fourth or fifth century.[3]

Among the Ukrainians[4] the predecessor to the peel oven within the home was an open fire. Food was prepared in vessels balanced on rocks heated by the fire. Thereafter, vessels were suspended above the fire. Up until this time, the fire pit was located on the ground. Smoke from the fire gathered along the ceiling of the room, eventually exiting through the open doorway (windows in these dwellings were fixed in the walls), which also allowed entry of the oxygen required for combustion.

This had an obvious influence on the appearance of these living environs. A strong band of soot on the walls of the room identified the smoke zone that enveloped its upper, and not so upper, reaches when the fire was lit. Furnishings were sparse, and decoration in the room was virtually non-existent. Even furniture for sitting was specifically constructed low so that the inhabitants of the room would be as comfortable as possible.

Over time conditions improved. People added vent holes, either in the ceiling above the fire or in the adjacent wall high up near the ceiling, and raised the fire pit off the ground onto a clay platform built into the corner of the room most adjacent to the doorway. This meant that the door, still the only source of combustion air, would tend to be hinged on the side of the doorway closest to the fire. Cooking was done on the platform on or adjacent to the open fire. These changes improved living conditions in the dwelling by raising the smoke zone and accelerating the venting of smoke out of the room.

A short time after, a formalized oven cavity was created at the rear of the platform for baking or roasting, leaving the front free for a cook fire. With the specific exception of the Lemko sub-grouping, the mouths of these ovens faced the doorway. (Lemko ovens face into the room, away from the doorway.) It has been argued that locating the *pich* with its mouth facing the doorway in the corner immediately adjacent to the doorway was the most efficient location in the traditional style of Ukrainian home.[5] Not only did the doorway provide combustion air to the oven, but this same draft drove the heated air from the *pich* farther into the room. This style of *pich* could be found well into the twentieth century in parts of Ukraine, especially among poorer households.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the *pich* had continued to evolve in conjunction with other improvements in the dwelling. By that time, the *pich* generally occupied about twenty-five per cent of the floor space in the single dwelling room of the home. A hood was constructed over the front ledge of the *pich*, over the mouth of the oven. Connected to the ceiling or wall vent, this hood trapped a majority of the smoke created by the cookfire or oven and directed it to the vent holes, which either expelled it directly into the attic area or into the adjacent ceilingless hallway. Although limited because of existing surtaxes and material costs, some houses even boasted masonry chimneys or woven wattle vents that eliminated smoke directly outside the home. A laying or sleeping ledge over the oven was also added in most cases, expanding the amount of useable space in the room.

Continued improvement of the *pich* throughout the nineteenth century reflected the general trends of improvement to yards and buildings in Ukraine. Even the cooking fire was being removed from its open location under the hood to an adjacent enclosed firebox called a *shparhat*, constructed of clay and covered with a cast-iron top.[6] Consequently, the amount of intrusion of smoke into the living area became minimal by comparison with earlier eras. Lighting and hygiene were further improved once interior wall and ceiling surfaces and the *pich* were whitewashed. Decorative embellishments increased in the form of displayed textiles on walls and furniture and wall painting. Clay floors and plastered ceilings were covered in planking. Although not prevalent throughout, this was the ultimate version of home interior known to the average Ukrainian villager immigrating to Canada from the end of the nineteenth century onward.

Design

Many of the variants of the *pich* that developed among the western Ukrainians by the turn of the twentieth century were replicated on the Canadian Prairies. While differing in appearance, they also followed a rather uniform set of design principles. The most important of these principles concerned the size and shape of the baking/cooking cavity, which also served as the firebox.

The oven cavity was generally oval in shape with the opening, or *cheliust*, forming its narrowest point. Its size reflected the multipurpose nature of the oven. Extending upward from the mouth toward the back, the height of the *pich* cavity increased from about one foot (31 cm) at the *cheliust* to a maximum of about sixteen inches (41 cm). However, when speaking of peel ovens in general, a cavity as low as eight inches (20 cm) is seen as being ideal for baking because the oven is more sensitive and efficient. Ovens with cavity heights of eleven to thirteen inches (28 to 33 cm) are not uncommon and are recognized to be necessary for roasting and general food preparation, although their overall performance is not as fast or good.[7] Larger cavities result in heat stratification, where each vertical heat zone has a different temperature and moisture condition. This also creates a tendency toward eddy currents in the convected

heat inside the cavity, which may further promote non-uniform baking.[8] Nonetheless, elements such as these could be taken into account, and ovens of much larger proportions are known to have existed.[9] Thus, the larger cavities of the Ukrainian ovens, while not perfectly efficient, were well within the design principles associated with peel ovens. Furthermore they not only accommodated the general diet of the settlers,[10] but their slightly larger cavities also allowed a person to crawl inside on his or her back to undertake any necessary repair of the inner surface.

The versatility of the *pich* design is also reflected in its main material of construction—clay. Whereas metal cookstoves and heaters were not unknown to the Ukrainian immigrants even before their arrival in Canada, it was difficult to find any single metal unit which could perform both functions efficiently. While still requiring more maintenance than the metal variety, the bodies of properly prepared clay stoves remained elastic even while subjected to wide ranges of temperature. Of course, even after the baking was done, the clay structure of the *pich* allowed it to function as a much more efficient heat sink than any manufactured heater or furnace. Although clay is only about twenty per cent as dense as cast iron or steel, it is capable of storing over eighty per cent more heat per pound (0.5 kg). Therefore, heat produced initially for food preparation could be retained well after the food was removed from the oven and released slowly to produce an even heat.[11]

To be able to achieve optimum conditions for preparing food and keeping maintenance of the unit to a minimum, the hearth and the walls surrounding the *pich* cavity were about four inches (10 cm) thick. To these were added other layers or accessories made of clay, often mixed with materials that differed from those used in the hearth and walls. While some of these additional layers contributed to the operation of the oven, others enhanced its performance. For example, the type and amount of material used under the hearth surface could determine the rate of heat transfer between the heating system of the oven and the food being prepared.[12]

The *pich* was designed for three forms of heat transfer: radiation, conduction and convection. In describing the function of peel ovens, the process of radiation is further separated into two categories: top heat and bottom heat.[13] "Top heat" radiates or is forced downward from the top of the oven chamber onto the product being prepared, whereas "bottom heat" radiates upward to the bottom of the product. Although one might expect that equal proportions of bottom and top heat would be desirable for food to be heated with consistency, other factors come into play that call for differences in top and bottom heat. Products needing to be baked slowly, for example, require a maximum of top heat and a minimum of bottom heat radiation.[14] Still, the efficiency of the radiation process not only varied with the temperature of the oven surfaces, but also with the temperature of the food which absorbed the heat from those surfaces.[15] Even details such as shape and colour could affect the results.[16]

Conduction has been considered the most incidental of the heat-transfer processes because it is highly influenced by the conditions that were created for ideal radiant heat. Once these conditions, including hearth type, food container (in the case of the Ukrainians, mostly earthenware) and type of product are established, very few variables remain that could alter the existing processes of heat transfer. Therefore, conduction is a process that has been looked upon as little more than something that can be calculated or measured with a high degree of accuracy.[17]

Convection, being the least apparent, was probably the most underestimated and least conceivable process of heat transfer in the peel oven. Yet, in these direct-fired ovens, where the oven cavity alternately functions as the firebox and food-preparation chamber, convection is actually the principal mode of heat transfer. It involves the "tranmission of heat from one point to another through the medium of a substance capable of free circulation,"[18] and relies heavily on having the oven chamber built to a shape and size that are conducive to convective circulation. As mentioned previously, the *pich* chamber is oval in shape with a single opening or mouth whose height from the hearth is several inches (centimetres) lower than the highest point of the cavity. This uppermost zone (known in peel ovens as the dome or crown[19]) of the chamber, where steam accumulates as the food is prepared, is actually one of the most critical points of the oven. While baking bread in the peel oven, for example, "steam condenses on the cool surface of the dough and keeps it moist through the early stage of baking. This allows maximum expansion of the dough piece as a result of oven spring. The steam also facilitates starch gelatinization on the outside of the loaf. When the steam is discontinued and the baking completed in dry heat, the starch has a

high glaze."[20] Without the difference in height between the dome and the oven mouth, free or "passive" convection is impossible and the baking process is impeded.

In peel ovens like the *pich*, the media of heat transfer in the convection process are air and steam,[21] and differences in air masses in the chamber cause steam-laden currents of air to circulate throughout the chamber. As the product absorbs heat from the oven walls and hearth and radiates it back into the cavity radiant heat transfer is perpetuated.[22] The rather high chambers of the *pich* built by the early Ukrainian settlers in Canada actually hindered this reciprocating process, for they created an uneven distribution of steam-laden heat, affecting the quality of the food product.[23] Thus, a *pich* could be doomed to failure in the earliest stages of its construction, for there were few ways of improving its performance if built without a dome of appropriate proportion to the rest of the oven cavity.

Materials and Construction

The style of *pich* first constructed by the Ukrainian settlers throughout western Canada at the turn of the twentieth century differed in no way from those in their villages of origin during the same period. Therefore, nothing has been found to suggest that the hoodless style of *pich* was ever utilized in Canada, although subsequent changes introduced in Ukraine to the hooded *pich* were also implemented on the Prairies.

The materials for the construction of these ovens—clay, willow saplings, straw and chaff, sand and wood for rails—were readily available in the areas settled by the Ukrainians.[24] That, and the fact that construction of a *pich* required no cash investment, made the reintroduction of the *pich* to the life-style of the Ukrainians in rural Canada almost immediate.

The base of a *pich* was encased in a cribbing made of three- to six-inch (8- to 15-cm) wooden rails, notched and joined much in the same *zrub* manner as they were in the houses and outbuildings of the settlers. The cribbing was from one and a half to two feet (46 to 61 cm.) high, and its length and width were calculated to allow for as much as a six-inch (15-cm) ledge surrounding the exterior oven walls when finished. The space contained by the cribbing was at first filled with rocks and stones, mixed with the same type of yellow clay that was generally used in all building construction by the Ukrainian settlers. This mixture was regularly tamped down as it was added to the space, using a large, flat-ended club-like tamper. After several layers, the stones were replaced by sand. By the time that the clay, sand and stone mixture reached the top of the cribbing, it had been compacted to a concrete-like consistency. The last four inches (10 cm), in fact, were wet clay mixed with sand. Once dry, this layer formed the hearth of the *pich*.

Preparation of the base was followed by the construction of the oven walls. Several styles of construction are known to have been used traditionally.[25] Probably the simplest involved the preparation of a form or plug made of such materials as earth, straw or wood, roughly shaped to the size of the proposed oven cavity. The clay mixture used for the walls of the oven was then simply patted over this form. As the clay dried, the plug was either pulled or burned out of the oven.[26]

Other techniques called for the preparation of a green willow sapling framework to support the clay walls of the oven as they dried. This style of construction can even be found in the "mud-and-cattied" chimneys of early America, whose builders also recognized the need for green saplings, "so they will shrink along with the clay as it and they dry and turn to char. The sticks act mainly as an internal scaffolding to hold the clay in place till it can dry and be baked to hardness by the heat of the fire."[27] The saplings were about an inch (2 cm) in diameter. Looking somewhat like the inverted ribs of a ship's hull, they were pushed into the surface of the hearth along one of its sides at intervals of six to eight inches (15 to 20 cm). The ends of the saplings were bent over into bow shapes (*kabluky*) and inserted into the surface of the hearth again at the opposite side.[28]

There were two methods used to cover the framework, involving two different ways of preparing the clay. One way was to create a mixture of clay, cut straw and chaff, and daub it on both sides of the saplings. This was done on the interior and exterior at the same time, starting at the base. Daubing was repeatedly built up on either side until it reached the top, thereby encasing the framework completely. Wet clay was then mixed with sand for the finishing layers, both inside and out. A second technique was similar to one used in constructing building walls in parts of Ukraine where logs were scarce. It involved the preparation of clay with uncut straw into long rolls. The rolls, called *valky* (sing. *valka*),[29] were then interwoven with the willow framework, and the exterior and interior surfaces daubed with clay and cut straw or

chaff to smooth them out. Whichever technique was used, it was difficult to discern the difference once the *pich* was completed. Also, although the first technique made the oven a more homogeneous mass, there is no indication that either technique affected the operation or maintenance of the *pich*.

The next step in the construction of the oven was to let it dry. Initially it was allowed to dry at room temperature. Then, a small fire was built inside the cavity to speed the process of curing. Of course, at this stage there was no mechanism to capture the smoke from the fire, and it functioned like the older forms of hoodless *pich* that had existed in Ukraine until the nineteenth century. The smoke that gathered along the ceiling eventually escaped through the vent hole (*kahla*) cut in the adjacent wall, just under the ceiling at a height taller that the doorway.

At this point in the construction individual or regional styles were incorporated, determining the overall appearance and function of each individual oven. For example, the shape and dimensions of the front hearth varied, while the materials used in their construction remained constant. They usually consisted of a large slab of wood about two inches (5 cm) thick or more, whose length extended along the whole front of the base. They were at least a foot (30 cm) wide, and usually even wider. They were supported along one side by the base of the *pich* and rested on two posts driven into the ground at either corner of the opposite side. This created a storage space for kindling or cooking pots under the ledge. The top surface of the ledge was coated with the same clay mixture that was used to finish the hearth on the inside of the oven and was the same level as the bottom of the cavity. This allowed the ashes from the oven to be scraped out onto the ledge with as little inconvenience as possible. Sometimes the ledge extended along the side of the *pich* as well to form a seating ledge or work counter (depending on the height of the ledge). Although the traditional *pich* is described as having these ledges normally, almost none have been found in western Canada.

The next portion of the *pich* to be constructed also reflected regional variation in style. The *hor* or *horn* was a canopy or hood that extended beyond the front of the oven, directly over the mouth. As the smoke produced during the firing of the oven cavity escaped from the oven, the hood trapped it and redirected it toward the *kahla*. This made the living area of the room a lot more comfortable, although not smoke-free. The *hor* was basically box-shaped, although some narrowed as they extended toward the ceiling. In many cases, it rested partly on the oven and partly on two posts, which in turn rested on the front ledge of the *pich*. In other cases, the front posts were eliminated, requiring the hood to rest primarily on the oven and be suspended in front from the ceiling. The method of framing and finishing the *hor* was identical to that used in the construction of the oven portion. It was found, however, that the willow framework of the hood was less likely to char and disappear completely since it was rarely exposed to direct flame. The exterior clay surfaces of the *hor* were often more aesthetically shaped, for the same reason.

Fig. 1
Construction of a pich *using the* valky *method, Sokolowski residence, Edmonton, 1987. Note the first two courses of* valky *preceding this one have already been smoothed together. (Photograph by the author)*

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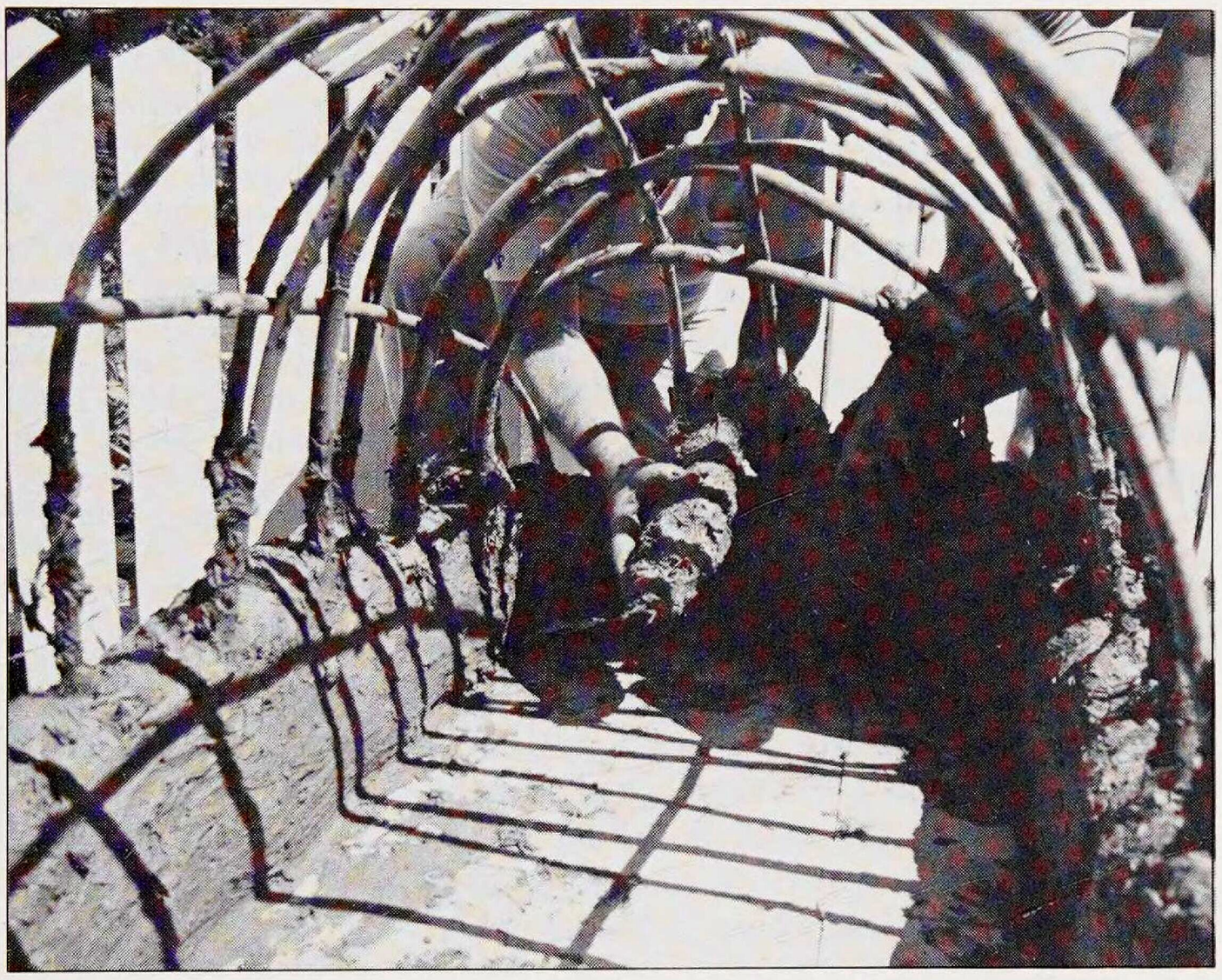

Fig. 2
The Sokolowski pich *nearing completion. This* pich *used a combination of turn-of-the-century and modern materials. Body and frame are made with clay and saplings; the firebrick hearth sits on modern-day cinder blocks. On completion, the oven was coated in stucco to reduce maintenance. (Photograph by the author)*

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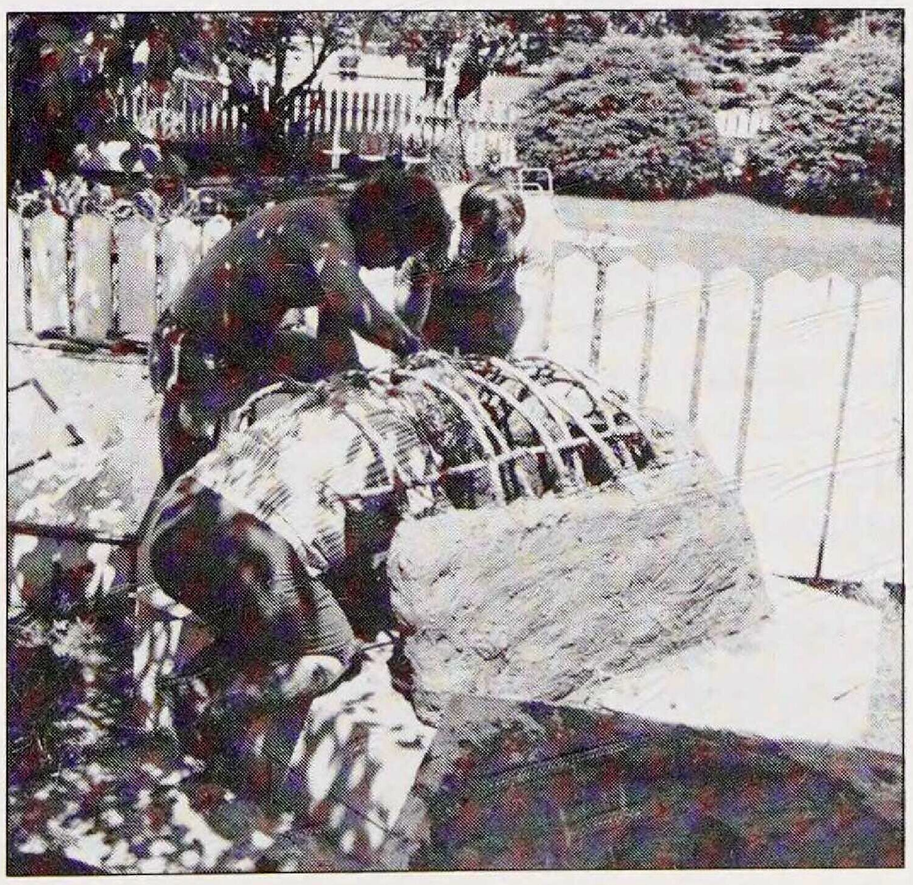

The hood (*hor*) was connected to the vent hole (*kahla*) by means of a clay and sapling tube or box called a *tsivka*. The hole inside the *tsivka* was not particularly large, sometimes being as small as six inches (15 cm) in diameter. A curious characteristic regarding the planning of these vent tubes was that they did not always encourage the escape of smoke from the hood in the manner of chimneys. In fact, some of these channels were almost horizontal in slope, allowing the smoke to overflow out of the vent hole into the adjacent room only after the hood had been completely filled with smoke. In these instances, it was not uncommon to see smoke billowing out from under the hood while the *pich* was being fired.

A final stage in the construction of the *pich* was actually quite optional and contributed very little to the its operation. Nonetheless, the ledge, which was built behind the hood over the oven, is the component that often elicits the most nostalgic memory of the *pich* among those who grew up with them. Taking advantage of the heat that continued to radiate from the *pich*, the curved surfaces of the oven walls were supplemented with an additional stage of wet clay and sand to form a large flat ledge. The clay was kept in place with a form which was removed once the ledge had hardened. Out of view behind the hood, this space was used for the storage of large but regularly used household items such as the dough trough. It was also used to dry such things as vegetables and herbs, kindling, and wet clothing. However, it is usually fondly remembered as the cozy place where children or older folk had the occasion to sleep.

Compared with the main part of the *pich*, the firebox, or *shparhat*, had a rather short-lived existence among the early Ukrainian settlers. Many of them had already heard of the cast-iron cookstoves that were available in Canada before they emigrated from Ukraine, and it was not long before the *shparhat* was removed from the side of the oven and replaced with the metal cookstoves. Nonetheless, the *shparhat* was an integral part of the type of *pich* that was redeveloped in Canada, however briefly. Basically, it was constructed in a similar manner to the base of the *pich*. Following this, walls were built up around the perimeter of this mass of clay and straw, and this was covered by a metal plate top. A crude metal fire door, which also provided a draft to the firebox, was incorporated into the front of the stove. Smoke was vented out of the *shparhat* with stove pipe, or else a vent tube similar to the *tsivka* was prepared out of saplings and clay. Whichever was used, it was connected to the side wall of the *hor* directly opposite the *kahla*.

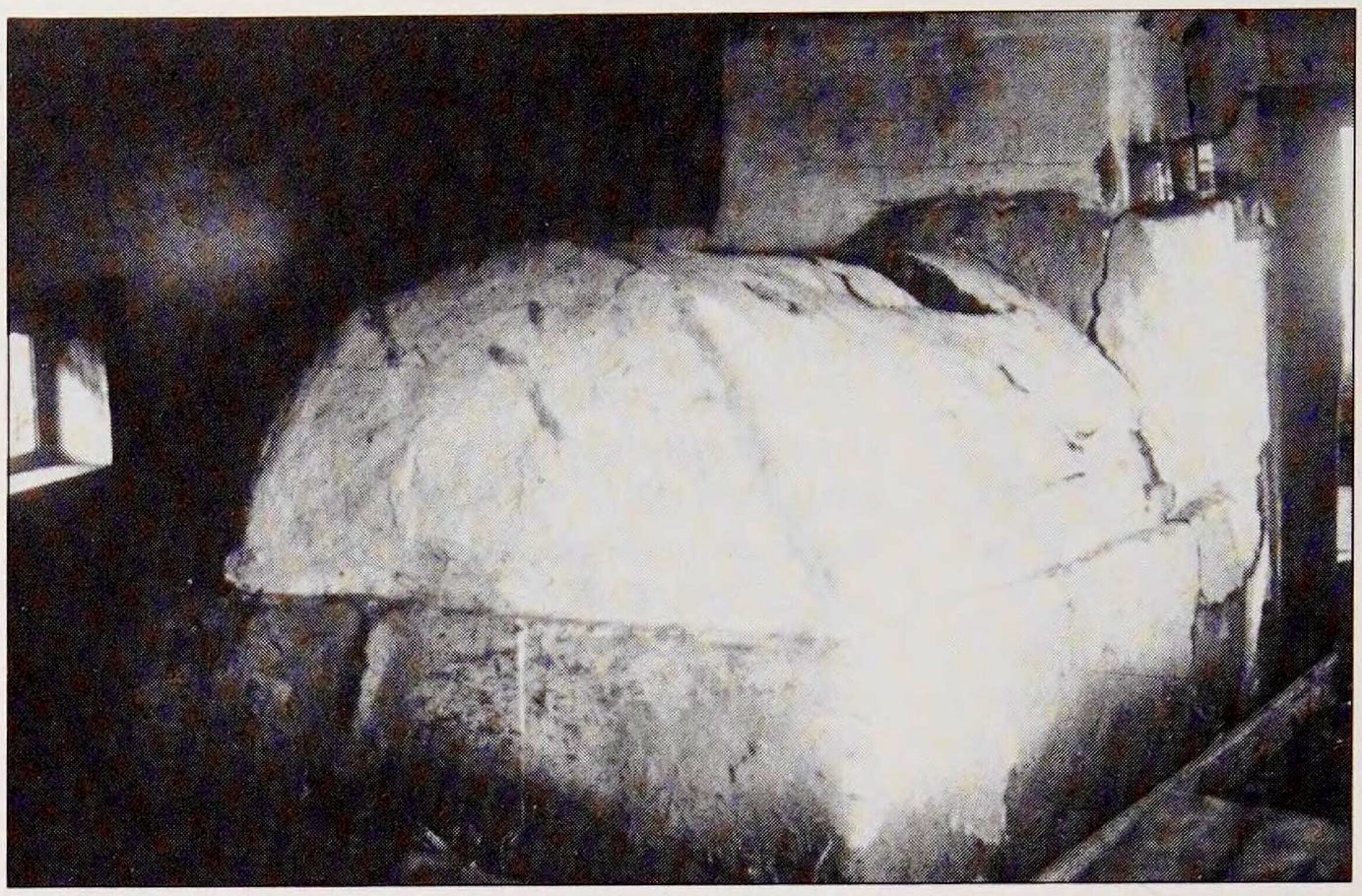

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Fig. 3
A pich *in the abandoned Chernohus dwelling at Wasel, Alta., 1978. This oven combines clay and willow framing with chimney brick. Constructed in the room adjacent to the dwelling room, it could be fed from the dwelling by an opening in the wall. (Photograph by the author)*

Thus, as with most of the rest of the material culture of western Canada's early Ukrainian settlers, the styles of *pich* that were constructed on the Prairies were replicas of those that the people had left behind in their native villages. It was only after the immigrants had become more acclimatized to the components of the resident material culture in the West that they began to consider alternatives.

Adaptation and Change in Canada

As mentioned above, one of the earliest changes to occur in the style of *pich* constructed by the early Ukrainian settlers in western Canada was the replacement of the *shparhat*. Realizing some of the advantages of the cast-iron North American cookstoves over the *shparhat*, the settlers invariably removed it from their dwellings. The cookstoves literally took their place, occupying the same spot previously occupied by the *shparhat*, venting into the *hor* in relatively the same manner. The *pich* and its newly adapted North American accessory were not always linked in this way for long. The *hor* was often unable to clear the volume of smoke produced by the stoves at a fast enough rate, and the smoke circulated into the living area unnecessarily. Soon, the Ukrainian farmers learned to vent the stoves separate of the *pich*, also choosing to incorporate masonry chimneys into the structure of their homes at this time.

A stage of adaptation that sometimes preceded the conversion to chimneys involved the creation of the *slipyi komyn* (literally "blind chimney"). A clay and sapling

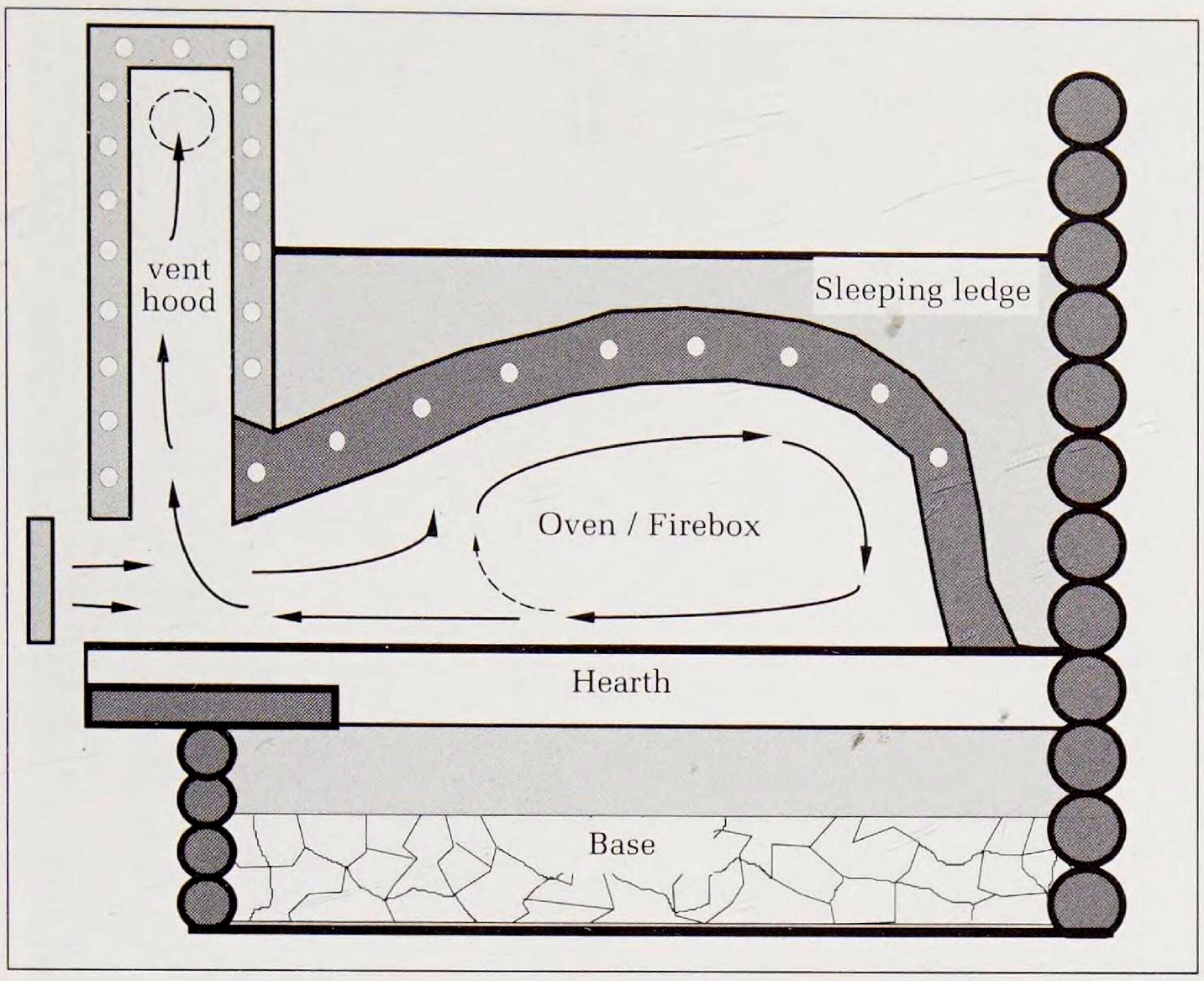

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Fig. 4
Cut-away, side view of a pich. *The arrows indicate desirable air flow in the oven for baking and venting. When the wooden oven plug (left) was propped against the opening, the current leading to the vent hood was cut off and the air circulated inside the oven. (Source: oral interviews, dismantled Slęmko* pich, *Edwand, Alta., and blueprint drawings of the same by Irka Onufrijchuk)*

stub built in the attic onto a hole cut in the ceiling over the *pich* or stove, the *slipyi komyn* had a hole or holes in its side rather than in its top. This trapped and extinguished any sparks escaping from the stove or *pich*, leaving only the smoke to exit out the sides. The holes of the stub were often connected to stovepiping which passed through the roof of the home to the outside air. This series of adaptations greatly improved upon any previous attempts to eliminate smoke from the dwelling. Of course, the masonry chimney, when constructed correctly, perfected the process even more.

Brick, followed closely by mortar and concrete, were also adapted as construction materials for the *pich*. Sheet metal and metal wheel rims were also incorporated permanently into the form of the oven cavity. People believed these materials would reduce the amount and type of maintenance required. While this may have been true to some degree, the overall impact of these new materials on the operation of the *pich* was not significant. Each of the components was often only a normal or even sub-standard grade of construction material and not well suited to prolonged and regular exposure to high temperatures. On the other hand, these new materials did serve for as long as these ovens were a regular part of the settler's life-style.

An incidental adaptation affecting the operation of the *pich* was not concerned with its materials or construction. The earthenware the immigrants transported to Canada eventually cracked or broke, and because there were very few potters operating among them who could replace these traditional vessels, the settlers quickly converted to the metalware readily available in any general store. This necessitated changes in the way certain foods were prepared. Even the temperature to which the oven had to be heated required some attention.

The greatest impact on the role of the *pich* in the Ukrainian-Canadian life-style and its future after the First World War was created with the total relocation of this oven from the dwelling. In some cases, this was a gradual process. Some farmers constructed "summer houses" with a *pich* for summer use, when it would be uncomfortable to operate the one in the dwelling. Because these buildings did not replicate the traditional layouts or dimensions of dwellings, the placement of the *pich* in summer houses was somewhat haphazard. Although these ovens were usually built into a corner of the room, the mouth of the *pich* did not face any predictable direction.

During colder weather when the heat was welcome, people would use the *pich* in the house. However, increasingly it was felt that the North American cookstove could provide sufficient heat all year (after all, the Ukrainians usually chose homesteads where firewood was plentiful) and that the family could put the space occupied by the *pich* to better use.[30] Therefore, the *pich* in the house was dismantled and a new one was built in the yard.

The style of the outdoor *pich* developed on the Prairies was a reversion to the type that had been built in homes in Ukraine a century before. Not having to be concerned with smoke in the outside air, the outdoor *pich* was built without a *hor*. Similarly, the sleeping ledge was without function outdoors and was not included.

It was soon rare to find any other food prepared in the outdoor ovens other than baked goods (mostly bread), although the height of the cavities of the ovens remained the same as when they were used to prepare a greater variety of food. A new feature, however, was added in an attempt to improve the baking efficiency of the outdoor *pich*. Some people put a hole at the rear of the cavity and some even added a length of stovepipe to the hole as a permanent fixture. It is possible that the hole was developed as a result of imperfect replication of the traditional model by the descendants of the original settlers, who often relied on mimicry in re-creating the material culture of their heritage. Many of the models

examined in the field have cavities with minimal differences in height between the crown and the mouth. Since this would have interrupted the creation of passive convection inside the oven, the construction of a hole at the rear to be used at least when the *pich* was being fired would have created a tunnel of air which improved conditions of uneven heating in the oven. Subsequently, the common impression of generations of Ukrainian Canadians is that the outdoor *pich* with a hole and stovepipe at the rear is something that was brought over with their ancestors from the old country.[31] (Actually, the relocation of the *pich* from the dwelling to outdoors in Ukraine was a much later process, occurring after the Second World War.[32]) Interestingly, those who are cognizant that the outdoor *pich* is nothing more than a redefinition of the indoor *pich* cannot explain why the indoor variety does not require a rear hole to function properly.

By the 1960s, both the indoor and outdoor *pich* in western Canada had largely fallen out of use. They had become objects of curiosity, creating opportunities for reminiscences and nostalgia, to be fired up usually for community celebration of rituals or rites of passage. By and large, they were resurrected for these distinct occasions by those who could still make them work properly. In the late 1960s the *pich* was revived through festivals in the Ukrainian communities of western Canada, which offered demonstrations and competitions of bread-baking in specially constructed permanent ovens on the festival grounds. Interest continues to grow even today,[33] and the number of privately owned ovens increases steadily in town and city alike. These are a new breed of *pich*, however, attempting to surpass the innovations of the past with even newer materials such as cast iron, firebrick, refractory cement, stucco and cinder block.

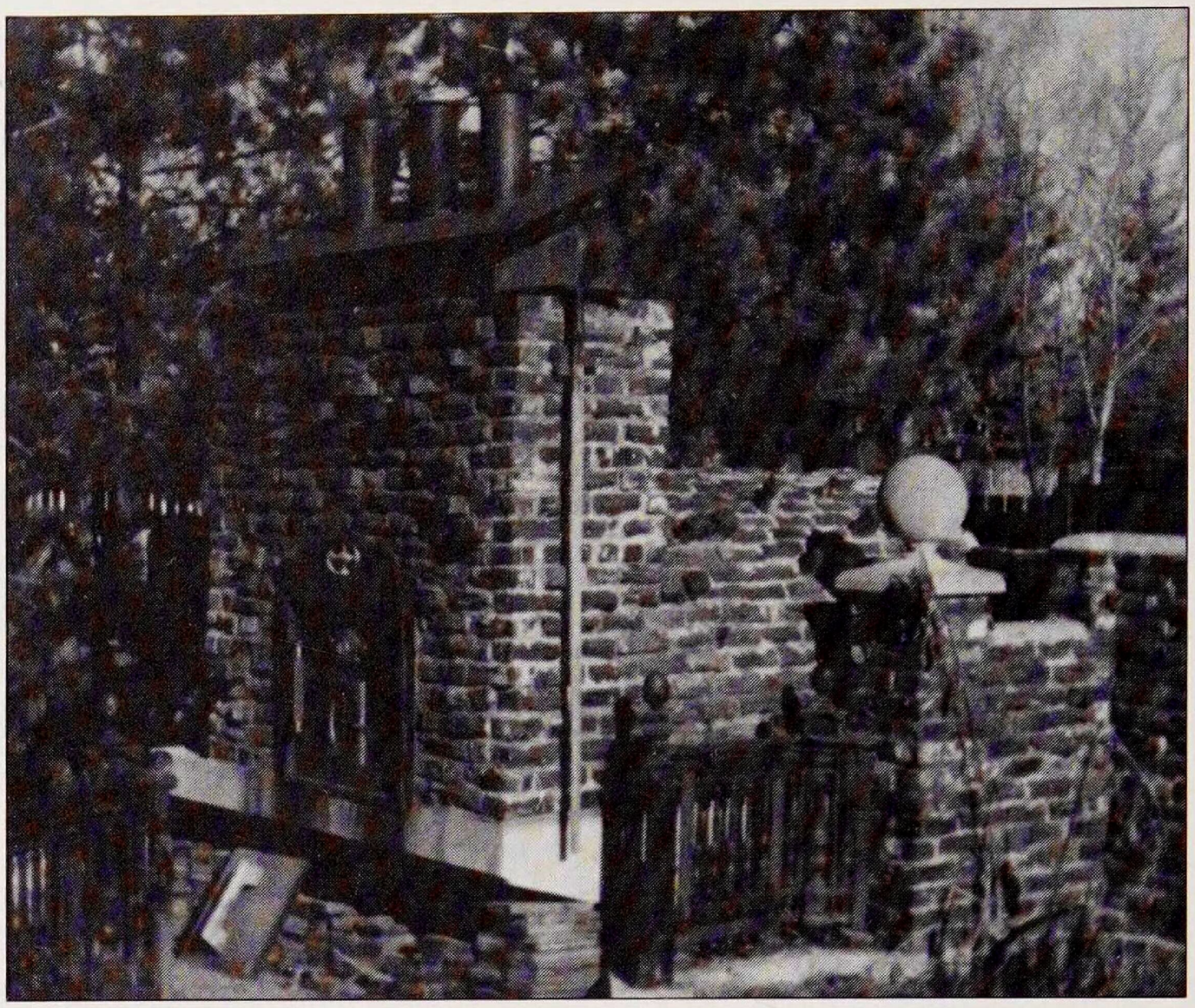

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Fig. 5
The Sembaliuk pich, *Edmonton. This outdoor* pich *retained the* hor *to allow for smoking food in its upper portions. The oven opening (not shown) and the hood can be blocked off from outside air with the cast-iron door. (Photograph courtesy of P.M. Sembaliuk)*

Notes

1. Yeshajahu Pomeranz and J.A. Shelenberger, *Bread Science and Technology* (Westport, Conn.: The AVI Publishing Company, Inc., 1971), p. 48.
2. John A. Dersch, "Bakery Ovens," in *Bakery Technology and Engineering*, ed. Samuel A. Matz (Westport, Conn.: The AVI Publishing Company, Inc., 1960), pp. 479–80. Although the description makes specific reference to using peel ovens for baking bread, it is clear they were used to prepare other foodstuffs as well.
3. L. Niederle, *Zivot starych Slovanu* (Praha, 1911), p. 730. Cited in Nadia Shurkala, "Formy opalennia v pivnichno-skhidnii chastyni Snynshchyny," in *Naukovyi zbirnyk*, ch. 4 kn. 1. (Presov: Museum ukrajinskej kultury vo Svidniku, 1969), pp. 414–15.
4. Unless otherwise noted the discussion that follows on the development of the *pich* among the Ukrainians is a summary of the following sources: A.F. Budzan, "Poselennia, sadyby, zhytlo," in *Boikivshchyna*, ed. Iu. H. Hoshko (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1983), pp. 159–66; T.V. Kosmina. "Tradytsii ta innovatsii v arkhitekturi narodnoho Kyieva ta kyivshchyny," in *Etnohrafiia Kyieva i kyivshchyny* (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1986), pp. 157–99; T.V. Kosmina, *Silske zhytlo Podillia—kinets XIX, pochatok XX stolittia* (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1980); T.P. Kishchuk, "Inter'ier," in *Narodna arkhitektura ukrainskykh Karpat*, ed. Iu. H. Hoshko (Kiev:

Naukova dumka, 1987), pp. 110–25; T.P. Kishchuk, "Inter'ier zhytla," in *Boikivshchyna*, ed. Iu. H. Hoshko (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1983), pp. 166–69; I.R. Mohytych. "Zhytlo," in *Narodna arkhitektura ukrainskykh Karpat*, ed. Iu. H. Hoshko (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1987), pp. 69–82; I.R. Mohytych and T.P. Kishchuk. "Sadyby, zhytlo, inter'ier," in *Hutsulshhyna*, ed. Iu. H. Hoshko (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1987); Volodymyr Shukhevych, *Hutsulshchyna* (Lviv: Naukove tovarystvo im. Shevchenka, 1899-1904), pp. 95–97; Shurkala, "Formy opalennia," pp. 413–27; Myroslav Sopoliga "Tradytsiine narodne zhytlo v oblasti Verkhnoi Tsyrokhy na Snynshchyni," in *Naukovyi zbirnyk*, ch. 9 kn. II. (Presov: Museum ukrajinskej kultury vo Svidniku, 1979), pp. 59–89; Myroslav Sopoliga, "Prostoralne planuvannia ta vnutrishnia kharakterystyka narodnoho zhytla v oblasti pivnichno-skhidnoi Slovachchyny," in *Naukovyi zbirnyk*, ch. 8. (Presov: Museum ukrajinskej kultury vo Svidniku, 1977) pp. 119–41; Khvedir Vovk, *Studii z ukrainskoi etnohrafii ta antropolohii* (New York: Howerla, 1916 [1976]), pp. 99–101.

5. Arkhyp H. Danyliuk. "Osoblyvosti rozvytku tradytsiinoho zhytla volynskoho Polissia," *Narodna tvorchist ta etnohrafiia*, N1, 1977, pp. 54–55.
6. Curiously, most of the contemporary Soviet sources noted above date this innovation as being introduced well into the twentieth century. Yet, the *shparhat* was being constructed by the early Ukrainian settlers in Canada before 1900! This suggests that, although it was part of their cultural vocabulary by the turn of the twentieth century, households were restricted (possibly economically) from implementing this improvement as immediately as they could in Canada.
7. Jule Wilkinson, *The Complete Book of Cooking Equipment* (Boston: Cahners Books, 1975), p. 51.
8. E.J. Pyler, *Baking Science and Technology* (Chicago: Siebel Publishing Company, 1952), p. 703.
9. "When in the seventeenth century, a little more science began to be used in oven construction, ovens also grew bigger. A baker in Dresden built himself an oven 40 feet square. In this he baked a monster loaf, 33 ft. long and 19 ft. wide, which was paraded through the streets. The baker was personally congratulated by King Frederick Augustus who awarded him a medal for his efforts." Ronald Sheppard and Edward Newton, *The Story of Bread* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), p. 109.
10. For a description of the diet and utensils associated with the *pich* and food preparation in Ukraine during this era, see L.F. Artiukh. *Ukrainska narodna kulinarlia* (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1977); T.O. Hontar, *Narodne Kharchuvannia ukraintsiv karpat* (Kiev: Naukova dumka, 1979); Shurkala. "Formy opalennia," p. 420.
11. Geri Harrington, *The Wood-Burning Stove Book* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1979), p. 207.
12. Dersch, "Bakery Ovens," p. 495.
13. Ibid., pp. 490–91.
14. Ibid., p. 495.
15. Ibid., p. 492.
16. One of the most striking characteristics of bread pans that were obviously used in a *pich* is the layers of soot and grime that have been allowed to accumulate on their exterior surfaces. When questioned about this, the women who used them indicated that "new pans," i.e. those without this kind of darkened surface, never baked bread as well as the old ones. Interestingly, little reference was actually made to the appearance of the pans, only to their age. It is this appearance, however, which often causes anguish to museum conservators. They want to preserve the artifact and those other artifacts with which it will be stored and usually have little recourse but to alter the natural state of the pans and remove their sooty "patina."
17. Dersch, "Bakery Ovens," pp. 492–93.
18. Pyler, *Baking Science*, pp. 699–700.
19. Dersch, "Bakery Ovens," p. 480.
20. Pomeranz and Shelenberger, *Bread Science*, pp. 699–700.
21. Pyler, *Baking Science*, pp. 699–700.
22. Ibid., p. 700.
23. Of course, modern ovens have overcome this problem by forcing the air to convect with fans where design has failed to do so naturally.
24. The information gathered for this section was compared with personal field observation of various styles of *pich*, mostly abandoned, found in east-central Alberta. Also, I am grateful to Ms. Judy Larmour for referring me to several ovens found while she was conducting fieldwork in the area around Mundare, Alberta. However, the most enlightening information, especially the specific details of construction that formed the basis of this discussion, were gained from the personal reminiscences of the late Vasyl (William, Bill) Slemko. Unless otherwise noted, these details were collected during the following interview, the tape and synopsis of which are part of the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village Research Collection, Historic Sites Service, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism: Interview with William J. Slemko, Radomir Bilash, July 24, 1981.
25. See Shurkala., "Formy opalennia," p. 414–15.
26. For comparative data from the old country see, for example, Iuliian Beskyd, *Materiialna kultura lemkivshchyny* (Toronto: Orhanizatsiia Oborony Lemkivshchyny, 1972), p. 59; Vovk, *Studii*, p. 99; Mohytych, "Zhytlo," p. 87.
27. John Vivian, *Wood Heat* (Emmaus, Penn.: Rodale Press, 1978), pp. 94–95.
28. Despite this simplified explanation, one must remember that the saplings would be different lengths to be able to create the crown of the oven cavity.
29. Kosmina, *Silske zhytlo Podillia*, p. 63.
30. In examining the second-generation one-and-a-half storey home built by the first families to settle the Edna–Star district in Alberta, it was found that both the cookstove and the staircase to the new non-traditional second floor were, with rare exception, located together in the corner that would have been occupied by the much larger *pich*.
31. Visitors to the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, for example, have often declared that

one of the outdoor ovens at the museum has been constructed incorrectly because it is lacking the familiar rear hole and stovepipe.

32. Kosmina, "Tradytsii ta innovatsii," p. 184.
33. In 1988, for example, I was asked by an individual of Ukrainian descent, who had been approached by a relative working on a community development project in Africa, to provide him with enough detailed information to be able to construct these ovens in Africa.

Research Reports

Rapports de recherche

Crosses of East Slavic Christianity among Ukrainians in Western Canada

A.M. Kostecki

Since the Middle Ages the cross has been a tangible and visible symbol of Christian faith and tradition. First appearing in the fourth century,[1] the cross developed in various ways among different churches, cultures and nations.[2] Two basic forms of the cross—relating to the Latin and Greek traditions in the Christian faith—emerged and are now found in many local variations. Although both Latin and Greek crosses are present in Western and Eastern liturgies,[3] they have always been symbols of distinctive ecclesiastical traditions. With the growth of national consciousness, often enhanced by religious concerns, crosses have become symbols of distinctive national identities.

For the eastern Slavs (today's Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians), the cross originated in Byzantium and was subsequently developed by the Kievan ecclesiastical tradition. It was brought to western Canada by successive waves of immigrants from Ukraine and is materially present in the geographic and cultural landscape of the Prairies. These settlers came mainly from two regions—Galicia and Bukovyna—which were under Austro-Hungarian political domination until 1919. The early Ukrainian immigrants often lacked national consciousness; church membership, Catholic or Orthodox,[4] was the main factor of collective identity. Venerated religious symbols, such as the cross, served to heighten national differentiation and distinctiveness.

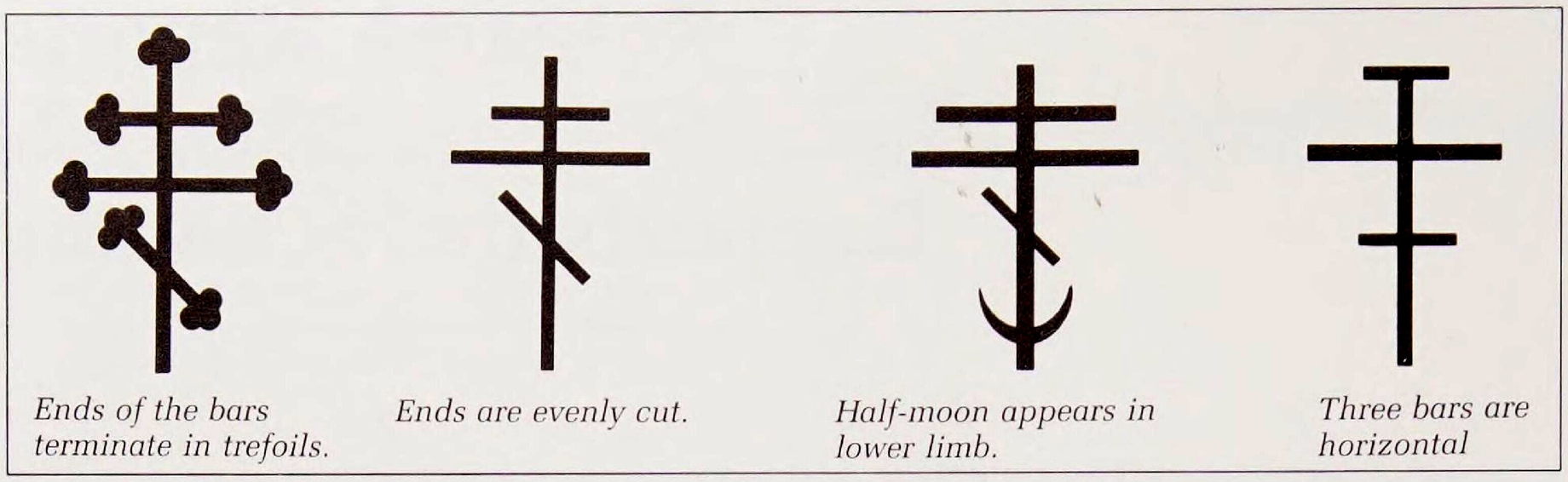
This article analyzes the cross primarily as a material object originating within east Slavic ecclesiastical and folk tradition but created in Canada as a collective symbol of Ukrainian religiosity and nationality. Aesthetic values and other manifold symbolic meanings are not treated here. The article is based on the author's field research conducted in 1986 among selected east Slavic communities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Functional Classification

Functionally, there are two main groups of crosses in the Ukrainian culture in western Canada: ecclesiastical (having a liturgical or theological function) and folk (having a function based on folk tradition). Ecclesiastical crosses include blessing, processional, standing liturgical, pectoral (of dignitaries) and decorative (printed and embroidered). Folk crosses include cemetery, wall, wayside and commemorative, pectoral (jewellery) and architectural (atop churches or in belfries). This functional classification is based on well-documented historical material from nineteenth-century Ukraine. As a model, it can be used to identify crosses of East-ern Christianity found in western Canada. Only two types of crosses, architectural and cemetery, can be positively identified as created in Canada.

To understand any form of religious experience among Ukrainians on the Prairies, it is important to distinguish between church or ecclesiastical art on the one hand, and religious folk art on the other. Historically, the former tradition was cultivated by monastic and eparchial centres, which tenaciously applied Byzantine models and rules when creating objects for liturgical and cult purposes. Icons were their primary expression, but the so-called "minor arts" such as printing and embroidery were based on the same aesthetic principles.[5] Distinct from these relatively sophisticated centres of production, folk artists based their work on patterns developed over many generations, individual creativity, foreign models and pre-Christian beliefs.[6]

The history and development of ecclesiastical and religious folk art in the Old World was quite different from that among Ukrainians in western Canada, where no comparable centres of Byzantine tradition took root. Cultural continuity had been disrupted by the Canadian experience; a western-Canadian Ukrainian



Ends of the bars terminate in trefoils.

Ends are evenly cut.

Half-moon appears in lower limb.

Three bars are horizontal

Fig. 1
Types of three-barred church crosses
◀

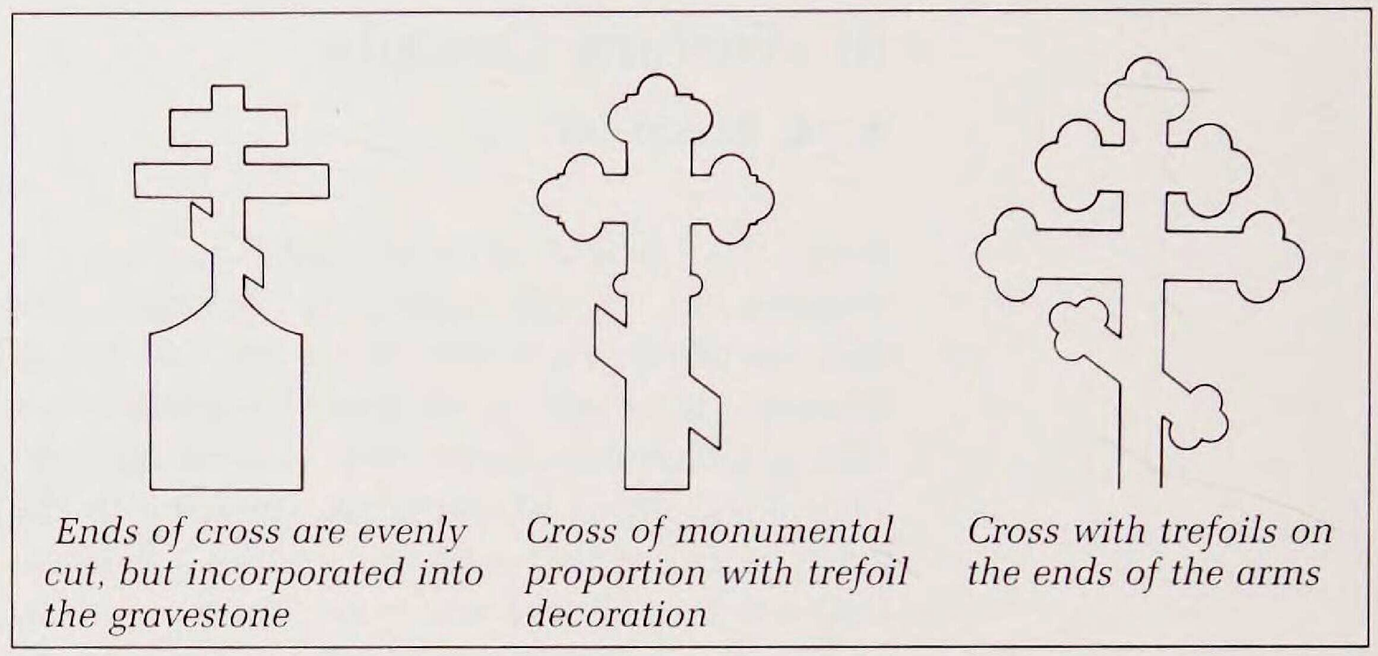
cultural entity reflected new ties and new settlement patterns. As a result, the two streams in Ukrainian religious art, ecclesiastical and folk, became more thoroughly interwoven and, simultaneously, less differentiated than they were in Ukraine. A popular aesthetic taste based on the memories of only a few generations took the place of a genuine folk tradition.[7] The community's religious needs eclipsed the individual creativity of folk artists. In the new environment of western Canada, the significance of the cross as a symbol of group identity was greatly enhanced.

Ukrainian cemetery and architectural crosses on the Prairies have three basic forms: the three-barred cross with eight points, the two-barred Latin cross and the two-barred Greek cross. These models have a universal character and are shared by many Christian denominations. No single one of these models is in its character distinctively Ukrainian, but Ukrainian nature is manifested in their formal and symbolic interpretation.

The Three-Barred Cross

Sometimes called an Eastern cross,[8] the three-barred cross has a special position in Ukrainian religious life. It is composed of a vertical limb and two parallel horizontal arms, plus a third arm in a slanting position. Occasionally, all three horizontal arms are parallel.[9] In western Canada, this cross is commonly seen on the top of Orthodox churches and sometimes in Catholic churches and cemeteries. Of 300 Ukrainian Catholic churches in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, only five per cent have the three-barred cross on the roof.[10] The most recent Catholic church with a three-barred cross is dated 1944, in keeping with the growing tendency to reserve the three-barred cross for Orthodox structures.[11]

Four types of three-barred crosses are found atop Ukrainian churches and belfries in western Canada (see fig. 1).[12] The use of three horizontal



Ends of cross are evenly cut, but incorporated into the gravestone

Cross of monumental proportion with trefoil decoration

Cross with trefoils on the ends of the arms

▲
Fig. 2
Eight-point cemetery crosses.

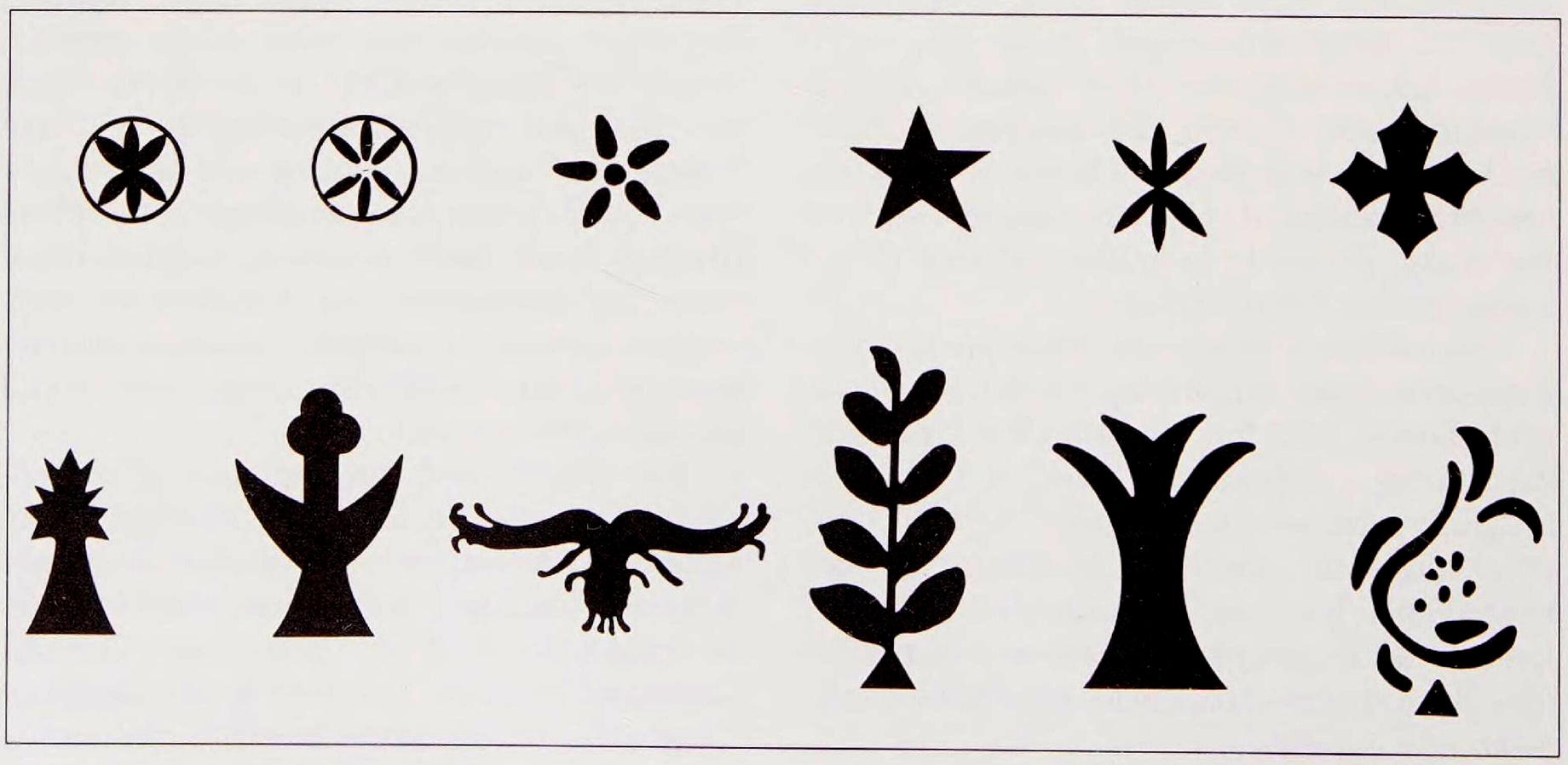
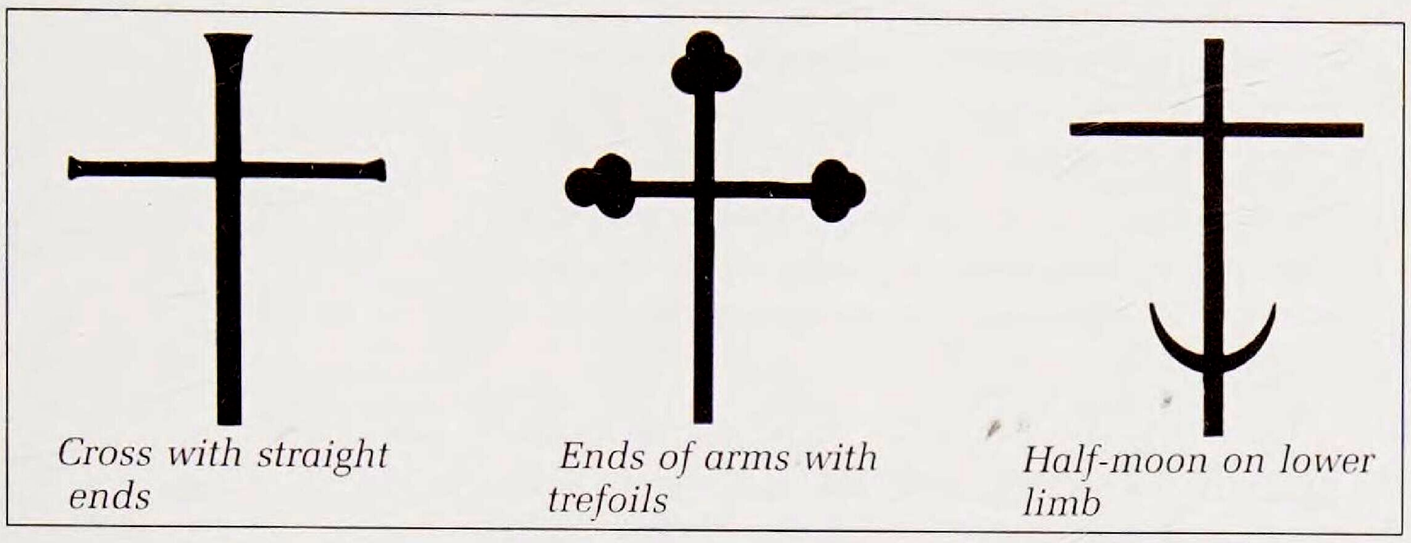


Fig. 3
Motifs used to decorate cemetery crosses
◀

bars for wrought-iron church crosses is rare for churches in Ukraine as well as those in western Canada.[13] The three-barred cross is typical of Ukrainian wooden blessing crosses and often appeared in prints and on seals.[14]

In cemeteries, the use of three-barred, eight-point crosses in western Canada shows a predilection for three types, as shown in figure 2.

Fig. 4
Two-barred church crosses
▼



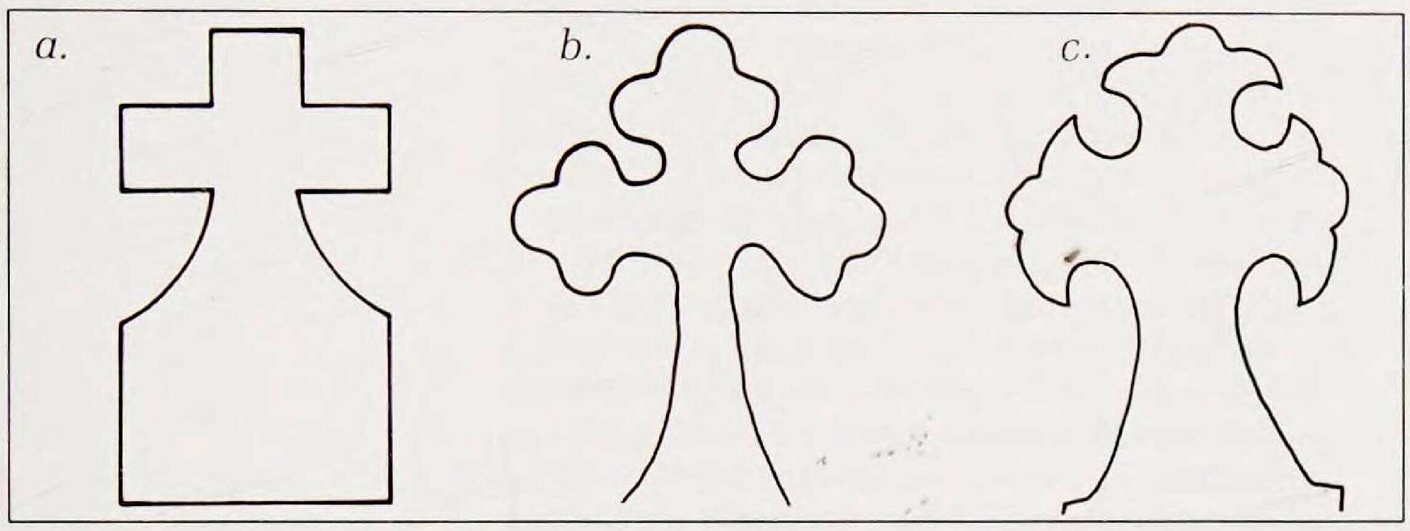


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Fig. 5
Two-barred cemetery crosses

The form and proportion of crosses on Ukrainian churches and in cemeteries were strongly influenced by the material used in their production. Church crosses were usually wrought-iron; cemetery crosses were most often stone or cement. The large surfaces on early cemetery crosses were often decorated with sculptured geometric motifs and then painted. The use of colour (black, red, green and orange on a white surface) was characteristic of crosses in the Bukovynian tradition. Stars, palms, crosses, flowers and circles are among the most commonly applied decorations (see fig. 3). Cement crosses were cast in molds with similar motifs.

This kind of ornamentation on stone and cement crosses suggests a derivative use of colour and decoration that was originally applied to wooden crosses. One can assume that the first Ukrainian cemetery crosses in western Canada were made of wood, but that most have disappeared from the prairie landscape.[15]

The Two-Barred Cross

Both the Latin and Greek crosses, in spite of their distinctive forms and origins, have been venerated within Western and Eastern churches. The correct proportions for the Latin cross are eight squares high and five squares wide. The Greek cross has seven squares arranged vertically and seven horizontally.[16] In Ukraine, the Latin form, a realistic representation of the historic cross, was atop all the oldest churches, whereas the Greek form was largely used for liturgical purposes and rarely as an architectural cross.[17] In western Canada, crosses were not designed by architects or artists with a formal aesthetic education, but by local blacksmiths or farmers who did not apply strict rules of proportion. Consequently, it is often impossible to determine whether a given cross is of the Latin type but with a shorter limb, or a Greek type with a longer limb. This uncertainty does not, however, disturb the dominant position of the Latin cross: from among 170 roof crosses in Manitoba, only ten per cent are of the Greek type (fifty per cent are of the Latin type, and forty per cent are three-barred crosses).[18]

Two-barred crosses (including both Latin and Greek forms) found on Ukrainian churches in western Canada may be divided into three groups, as shown in figure 4. The first group shows no special features related to the eastern liturgy or to Ukrainian folk patterns. The cross with the trefoil ends, designed in various ways, has been popular in Ukraine and among Ukrainians in western Canada; it is widely perceived as Ukrainian, in spite of extensive use by Christians of other ethnic origins. A distinctive Ukrainian folk character is present in the third group only (see note 12 on the half-moon element).

Two-barred cemetery crosses can be categorized into three groups: crosses with straight bars, having the lower section of the limb incorporated into the gravestone (fig. 5a); crosses with trefoil bars of varying forms and proportions (fig. 5b); and Alisée Patée crosses inscribed within a circle with the three arms curved outward and the lower limb incorporated into the gravestone (fig. 5c). The materials, techniques of production, colours and decorative motifs of these two-barred crosses are the same as those of three-barred crosses.

In recent decades, crosses with distinctive Ukrainian features have gradually disappeared from cemeteries on the Prairies. They have been replaced by popular patterns lacking traditional east Slavic characteristics. As symbols of a Ukrainian heritage in western Canada, Ukrainian crosses on the Prairies cannot be fully appreciated without comparison to their antecedents in Ukraine, where they held a position of privilege within the landscape and Ukrainian art.

In Ukraine, a harmonious combination of ecclesiastical and folk elements, variety of shapes

and richness of decoration distinguished Ukrainian crosses from Polish ones, which often were nearby. In contrast to icons, Ukrainian crosses not only maintained their own character but influenced the neighbouring traditions of Latin, Polish folk art.[19]

Ukrainian crosses from western Canada illustrate a direct continuation of the thousand-year-old tradition of Ukrainian religious art. When compared with examples from Ukraine itself, their aesthetic values and limited variety of form make them less interesting to an art historian or museum curator. However, their significance as collective symbols of a distinctive group identity is even stronger and possibly more important in Canada than it was in Ukraine.

Notes

This article was made possible by a grant from Multiculturalism Canada.

1. For data on origins, see l'Abbé Martigny, "Numastique chrétienne," in *Dictionnaire des antiquités chrétiennes* (Paris: Hachette, 1889), p. 528; "Croce" in *Encclopedia Cattolica* (Vaticano, 1948–54), vol. 4, pp. 957–62 and "Croix (adoration de la)" in *Dictionnaire de la théologie catholique* (Paris, 1908) pp. 2349–50.
2. Totally, including pre-Christian and heraldic crosses, there are about 400 types of crosses. See F.R. Webber, *Church Symbolism* (Detroit, Mich: Gail Research Co., 1971).
3. L'Abbé Martigny, "Croix (signe de la)," *Dictionnaire,* p. 225.
4. For purposes of clarity, only two terms, "Catholic" and "Orthodox," are used here to describe the much more complicated legal situation within religious tradition which originated in Kiev. Similarly, the general terms of "Ukraine" and "Ukrainian" have apolitical meanings—historical, cultural and geographic. As a result of such simplification, the legitimacy of claims to the whole Ukrainian religious patrimony by groups calling themselves Rusnaks, Bukovynians, Ruthenians, Lemkos, etc. is here ignored. This choice seems methodologically correct since these groups were and still are perceived in Canada as members of one homogeneous cultural and ethnic entity.
5. Woodcut prints of the seventeenth century and published at Kiev in liturgical books often feature representations of crosses. See, for example, Mytropolyt Ilarion, *Tryramiennyi khrest zo skisnym pidnizhkom: natsional'nyi khrest Ukrainy* (The Three-Barred Cross: The National Cross of Ukraine) (Winnipeg, 1951), pp. 65–75. See also E. Kasiniec and B. Struminskyj, *Old Ruthenian Printed Books and Manuscripts in the Episcopal and Heritage Libraries of the Byzantine Catholic Diocese of Passaic* (Passaic, N.J., 1980), p. 8.
6. The originality of folk crosses from Ukraine make them very different from Byzantine liturgical crosses. Formally, they are similar to Ethiopian crosses. (See D. Chtecherbakivsky, *L'Art de l'Ukraine* (Kiev–Prague, 1922), pp. 44, 48.
7. The term "popular" is used here to describe common, unsophisticated art forms, in contrast to "folk," which pertains to authentic, traditional and often sophisticated art forms.
8. Webber, *Church Symbolism.*
9. There is controversy among Ukrainian scholars about which form of eight-pointed cross is of national Ukrainian character. The arguments used by both sides are, for this article, less relevant than the discussion itself, which shows how important the symbol of the cross is to the Ukrainian sense of national identity. In this regard, see, for example, Ilarion, *Tryramiennyi khrest*; V. Shcherbakivs'kyi, "Ukrains'ka forma khresta," *Ukrains'kyi pravoslavnyi kalendar na 1951* (New York, N.Y., 1951); A. Kushchins'kyi, "Sviatyi khrest i ioho tradytsyini formy," *Pravoslavnyi Ukrainets'* (Chicago, Ill., 1970), nos. 120, 121.
10. See A.M. Baran, *Ukrainian Catholic Churches of Saskatchewan* (Saskatoon: Ukrainian Catholic Council of Saskatchewan, 1977); Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Historic Resources), "Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba: A Building Inventory" (Winnipeg, 1987).
11. Although a large sampling from Saskatchewan and Manitoba supports this observation, there are indications that elsewhere the three-barred cross is still used by Ukrainian Catholics as a symbol of their eastern Christian tradition. In 1988, for instance, during celebrations held in Rome and Czestochowa (Poland) marking the millennium of Christianity in Ukraine, three-barred crosses were displayed by worshippers to symbolize religious and national identity. See, for example, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 4 September 1988, p. 3.
12. The trefoil motif (also known as the botonée, bourbonée or trèfle cross) is often used to decorate wall, processional, cemetery and architectural Ukrainian crosses. Western Christian churches commonly stamped the trefoil cross onto the covers of hymnals and liturgical books. The half-moon (crescent) motif on the lower section of the cross limb has appeared on many crosses in Ukraine since the seventeenth century. This innovation was introduced by folk artists to commemorate the Christian victory over Islam and, thus, is directly tied in with the national history of Ukraine. In western Canada it was retained as an ornamental motif of early Ukrainian pioneer churches, both Catholic and Orthodox. This same motif also spread from Ukraine to eastern Poland, where it was often used to decorate Roman Catholic crosses. See R. Reinfuss, *Ludowe kowalstwo artystyczne* (Wroclaw, 1983).
13. Baran, *Ukrainian Catholic Churches.*
14. Shcherbakivs'kyi, "Ukrains'ka forma khresta."
15. The Ukrainian Heritage Village near Edmonton has a wooden cemetery cross of monumental proportions. See Ukrainian Heritage Village catalogue no. 76.2.111.
16. Webber, *Church Symbolism*, pp. 101-103.
17. See T.D. Hewryk, *Masterpieces in Wood: Houses of Worship in Ukraine* (New York, N,Y.: The Ukrainian Museum, 1987); E. Huzar, *Liturgika Hrek.-Kat.Tserkvy* (L'viv, 1910), p. 23.
18. Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, "Ukrainian Churches."
19. Reinfuss, *Ludowe kowalstwo artystyczne*, p. 213.

Settling in: Tools and Farming Techniques of the Early Ukrainian Pioneers

MICHAEL EWANCHUK

The Ukrainian settlers who arrived in western Canada during the last decade of the nineteenth century and before the First World War came with specific objectives in mind: to acquire land—a homestead—and to engage in agriculture. They came prepared to meet the challenges facing them. Their most immediate tasks were to provide shelter for their family and, if they came early enough in the spring, to clear a patch of land for a garden, thus providing food for the family. The tools and utensils they brought helped them adjust to the pioneering condition and succeed in their efforts.

Dr. H.J. Hunter, erstwhile missionary physician of Teulon, Manitoba, writes:

> The First Ukrainian settlers who came to us knew how to get along with little. A man and his wife could go into the bush with an axe and a spade and little more, and make a home for themselves. Trees had to be cut down, shaped into logs for the walls of a house, smaller trees were cut for rafters, and the tall swamp grasses made excellent thatch. The clay from the sub-soil was mixed with water ... and puddled together....With this [clay mixture] the walls of the house were plastered thickly outside and in.[1]

True, such was the case with young married couples, or young couples who married after they came to Canada. Such was not the case, however, with the majority of experienced husbandmen who disposed of their properties in the Old Country. They knew the demands a new start in farming in the New World would place on them. They came prepared with the necessary tools and utensils, and their wives brought pouches of vegetable seeds and grain to plant. Some women even brought grates to be used over an open fire when cooking meals for the family. Packing cases held larger tools, such as the axe fitted with a helve, and a spade with handle attached, as well as the ever-useful hoe. Hand trunks contained smaller tools: chisels (mostly wood chisels), drills, handsaws, gimlets, gouging chisels, hand planes, a spirit level and a chalk line. They also brought hatchets (the carpenter's hatchet was called a *barda*) and broadaxes. One type of hatchet with a wood chisel cutting edge had an offset or curved handle to protect the carpenter from damaging his knuckles when chipping off rough spots in the log wall. Some broadaxes also had offset handles.

The axe and the saw were indispensable tools for building purposes and survival in the bush. The settlers brought several types of saws to be used in their carpentry and the cutting of wood. Light saws, with holders extending on each end of the blade for adjusting the angle of cutting (much like the ripsaw), were one of these types. The saw was made taut by twisting around the cord (linen cord was used in the Old Country) which pulled the side bars together to tighten the saw blade. When it was taut enough the winding stick was "sprung" around the cross bar. Most saws of this type were made in the same manner. For easier packing the saws were dismantled, and the blades rolled into a coil. The parts of the frame were packed separately. All that was necessary to ready the tool for use was to attach the blade at each end with a pin or nail and tighten the bar rope. For heavier work there was a crosscut saw with ends rounded to form a cylindrical tube into which were fitted detachable wooden handles. The crosscut saw was most handy in the cutting out of spaces in the log walls for windows and doors. (The log frame was built up ceiling high and "cut-ins" were made for these holes before the holes were cut out and frames inserted.) Some settlers also brought a saw like the Canadian bucksaw. The crosscut saw was used in felling trees and cutting them into logs of correct length; if a crosscut saw was not available the bucksaw was used. These saws could really be called European saws and were also widely used by settlers in eastern Canada.

The pod auger worked best for drilling holes in dry hardwood. Most houses in the Old Country were built of oak logs; sometimes these were spliced and holes had to be drilled for pegs. In eastern Canada, pod augers worked well for drilling holes in maple wood.

The hand trunk of some settlers (particularly the master builders) often included the smaller finishing tools: large and small wood chisels, a gouging chisel and a scraper for hollowing out wood for receptacles, gimlets, compasses, a marking gauge, a wooden square, a spirit level, a plumb line (*pijon*), a chalk line (*shnur*), a mitre box, a couple of planes and the ever-useful draw knife.

Some also brought cold chisels to make millstones for the quern. They brought the

hammer called the *molotok*. (Claw hammers were not in use as most home furniture was assembled with pegs.) Some nails (like those for shoeing horses) began to come into use; in Canada, the settlers bought nails in stores before going out to the homestead. Four- and three-inch (10- and 8-cm) nails were most useful. With these, settlers could nail together rafters and crossbars for the thatch over the roof.

In Ukraine people were used to the metric system of measurement. The settler building a house, however, did not use the metric rule, but relied on the ancient cubit measure (the *leekot*, or distance from elbow to middle knuckle). Rough measurements were made by stepping off the length. Soon after their arrival, the men acquired the folding two-foot (61-cm) rule and abandoned the metric measure.

Packed among the clothing of Ukrainian pioneer settlers and carefully wrapped were two valuable implements: the sickle with a serrated cutting edge, and the scythe. The scythe was put into use almost immediately in cutting hay for the animals and for family mattresses; the sickle was used for cutting long slough grass and reeds for the thatch of the new home. A cradle assembly was attached to the snath for reaping grain when it ripened. The snath was Canadian-made of light wood, first of dry willow, then seasoned poplar and, later, well-seasoned ash. Straight two- to three-inch (5- to 8-cm) dry spruce saplings were also used for the snath.

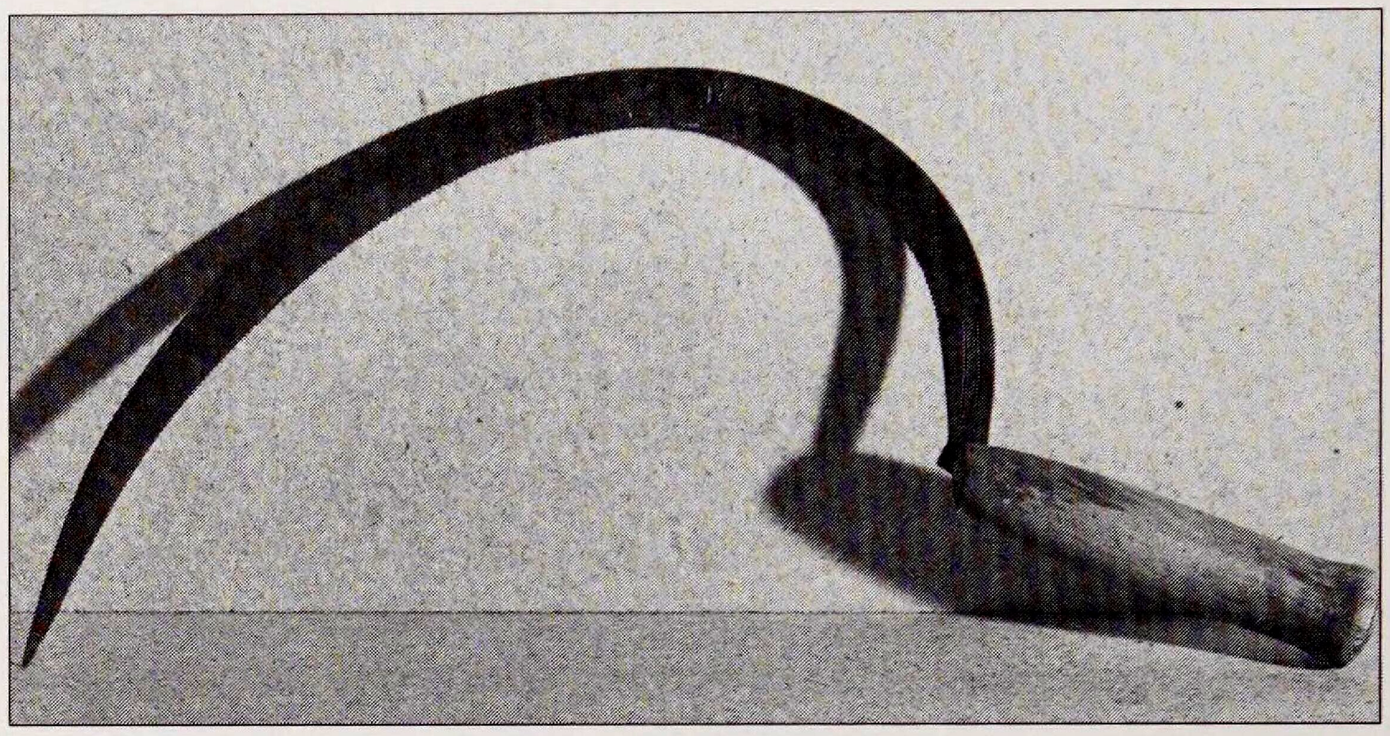
The serrated sickle did not require sharpening and remained in good cutting condition for a century; a cradle, with good care, also lasted a hundred years.

To attach the scythe to the snath a special metal ring was brought from the Old Country. The scythe was then attached with two wooden gluts, one wedge-shaped. The cradle was attached to the snath by a wedge-like glut of the crossbar of the cradle. The crossbar was at right angles to the scythe and had four teeth running parallel to the scythe. The crossbar was secured to the snath with a bow-like attachment.

To keep the scythe in good cutting condition it was sharpened with a whetstone, usually carried in a wooden receptacle filled with water. When the cutting edge became dull through contact with stones, it had to be attenuated—pounded-out. For this purpose the settler brought a hammer and small anvil.

The pioneer Ukrainians settling on bush farms applied their skills and folk tools and equipment to get started on the homestead. Once the building of their shelter was under way, the family cleared a patch of land for planting vegetables. And they had the requisite tools for doing that, too. With their axes they were able to cut down trees and brush; then they started to dig with their spades, chopping out roots with mattocks and sod with hoes. At this point a transition was made to the Canadian axe, which was better suited for clearing land; the Old Country axe was demoted to splitting firewood and cordwood. When the sod dried, it was chopped fine with the hoe, the roots were removed, and the plot was raked. The wooden rake had a willow crotch for a handle and a crossbar in which holes were drilled and four-inch (10-cm) pegs (the teeth) were fitted. Many settlers used the Canadian four-inch (10-cm) spike to fit the rake with teeth for rougher work. The light wooden

Fig. 1
A sickle (serp) *of the kind used by many Ukrainian settlers in western Canada. (From the W. Ewanchuk Collection, courtesy of Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)*



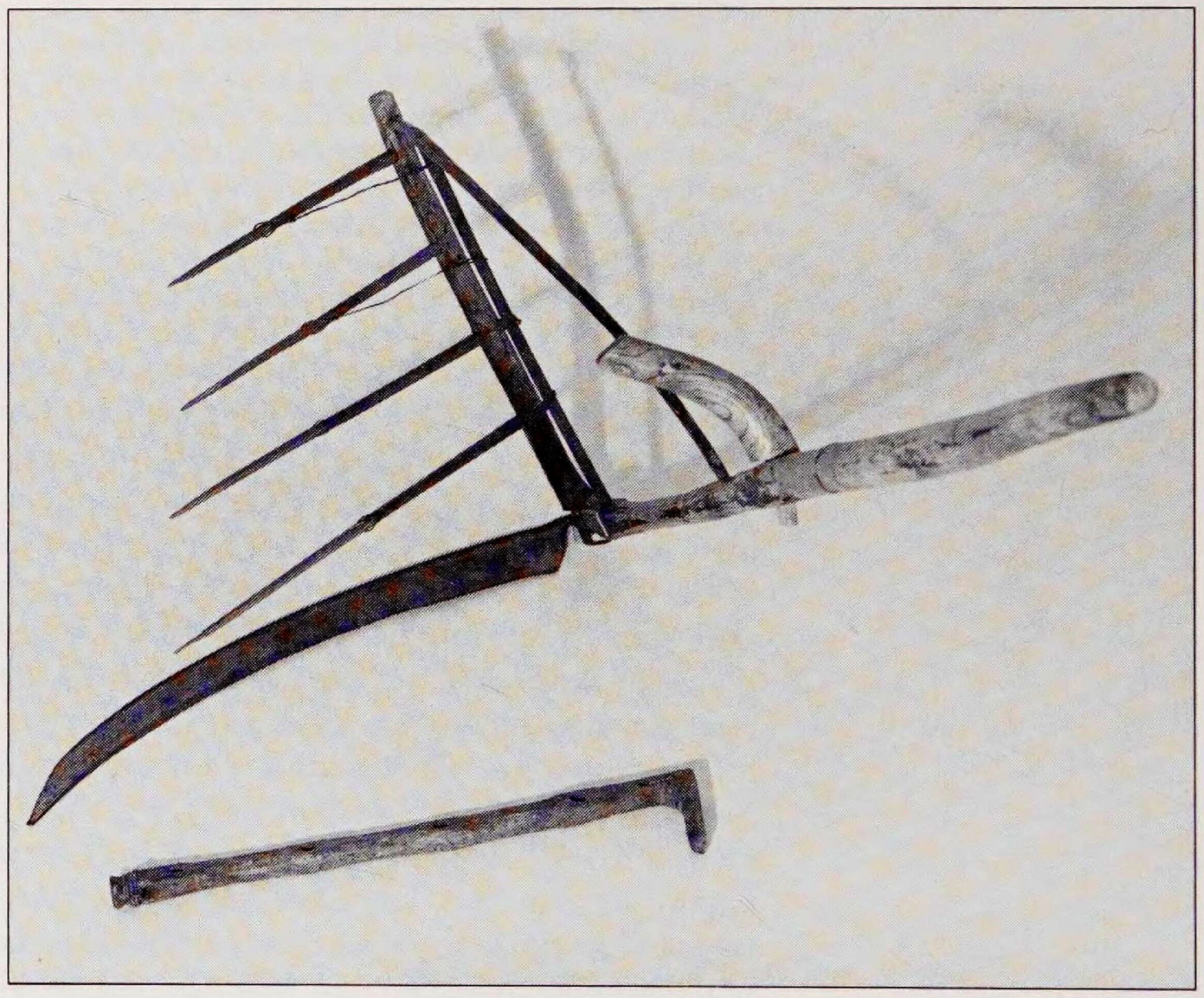


Fig. 2
Scythe (kosa) *with snath-handle* (kysija) *and cradle* (hrabky) *(from the W. Ewanchuk Collection, courtesy of Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)*

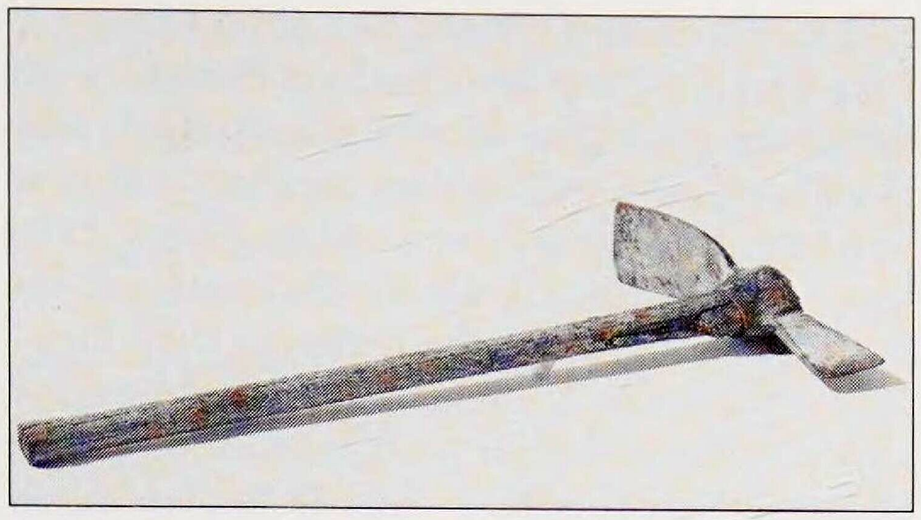


Fig. 3
A mattock (dzhagan) *with handle made of oak. (From the W. Ewanchuk Collection, courtesy of Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)*
▶

▲
Fig. 4
Clearing land with a mattock at Winnipeg Beach, Man., c. 1905. (W.J. Sisler Collection 202, courtesy of Manitoba Archives)

rake with wooden peg teeth was later used for raking hay. The first forks were made of a willow crotch or dry ash. The pioneer farmers soon surveyed the woods on their farms, noting materials they could use for rake handles, forks, axe and hatchet helves, and poles for sleighs and wagons. Farmers cut dry oak or ash into small pieces to make pegs, gluts and wedges.

If pioneer farmers had oxen, the first type of equipment they acquired was the plough. These were single-furrow walking ploughs with a metal beam and steel ploughshares and cutters. Such a plough made a furrow of twelve or fourteen inches (31 or 36 cm) in width and was light enough for a yoke of oxen to pull. For breaking land that had many roots, a breaking plough was used. It needed two yokes of oxen unless the soil was light, sandy loam. When the furrows dried enough they were chopped up with spade, mattock and hoe, and then harrowed. The seed was sown by hand (broadcast), and the plot harrowed again.

Haying

The first animal the settlers acquired was a cow. It was, therefore, necessary to prepare an ample supply of fodder for winter feeding. Wild hay was plentiful around the sloughs and in the clearings and could be cut with scythe.

As the seasons changed, settlers faced new problems: they needed additional implements to do the work. To avoid spending too much money on implements, they made their own handles or helves for the metal parts they brought with them. They needed a bench or apparatus on which to fashion these parts. When boards and planks were difficult to get, farmers split logs and whittled them down to rough planks out of which they made a wooden vise (called the *kobylnytsia*, "shaving marel"). It was very much like the shaving horse used in shingle tapering in eastern Canada and operated in the same manner. Having this vise, farmers could use the draw knife to make other implements. As the haying season approached they needed not only rakes, but also forks, which they made on the vise out of sturdy willow or dry ash crotches.

If the settler had a growing child who could help with the haying, another straight snath was made; to it was attached the light Ukrainian scythe and the child started to train. Haying with this implement called for a rhythmic body movement to cut the green hay and form a windrow. On the other hand, the heavier and longer English scythe attached to the curved snath was operated in a chopping method, and was much harder on the user. Icelandic settlers also used the straight snath, but it had two handles and the end of the snath fitted under the left arm.

Once the hay was cut it was left in windrows to dry; then it was raked with the wooden rake and piled into haycocks with the wooden fork. Later it was hauled into the yard and stacked.

Harvesting and Threshing

The harvest closely followed haying. The small patches of grain were reaped with the sickle or the cradle. The sickle was used to reap the fall rye and wheat, as these stems were long and difficult to cut with the cradle. Barley, oats and buckwheat were reaped with the cradle. Using the cradle called for considerable skill, as the cut grain had to be laid in straight windrows with the heads falling close together on the far side. When the rye was reaped with the sickle, it was bound with bands of freshly cut grain. The large sheaves were placed into stooks and left to dry. The Ukrainian stook was

called the *polukipok* and consisted of fifteen sheaves. It was built in the form of an X, with the heads upright, and covered by one sheaf. The fifteenth sheaf was placed on top to form a cap (a feminine appellation). This may have been because women did most of the reaping with the sickle in European countries ("alone she cuts and binds the grain"). Four stooks formed a unit of sixty sheaves, called the *kopa*. (During periods of serfdom peasants reaped grain for the lord of the manor and received the thirteenth sheaf or the thirteenth *kopa* for the labour done.)

Reaping buckwheat called for a special approach. It was reaped with the cradle, usually late in the evening or at night when the dew fell: the buckwheat when damp tended to shed less. For the same reason, binding was also done at night. Since buckwheat stems are too friable to make into bands, bands of rye or tall reeds were made earlier and kept damp in readiness.

After being hauled into the farmyard, the grain was threshed with the flail. Threshing was usually done when the cold weather set in. If the homesteader did not have a barn suitable for threshing, the ground was cleared of snow and a large patch of ice was made. The sheaves were then pitched close by the bands, cut and spread on the ice with the grain heads placed together; the spread grain was then flailed.

The flails the Ukrainian settlers brought from the Old Country or made in Canada were light and flexible. The beater (*bijak*) was usually made of ash or other harder wood so it would not split while beating the grain on the hard surface. The Ukrainian flail operated on the same principle as the Ontarian flail; however, where the English flail had the beater joined to the handle with metal ring, the Ukrainians joined theirs with soft rawhide. A leather cap was drawn over the head of the handle and the handle notched. At that point the leather thong was filled into the groove, retaining the strap in place. The handle, then, could rotate freely. The English flail rotated on a swivel.

Two people could flail the grain together after establishing a suitable rhythm. Young "flailers" got into difficulties at times: by breaking the rhythm they were hit over the head with the beater, and sometimes with the handle head. Getting hit with a Ukrainian flail head wasn't as bad as being struck with the handle head of the English flail, which had a metal ring.

After a considerable number of sheaves were flailed, the straw was raked away and the grain and chaff shovelled into a pile or bagged ready for winnowing. Small amounts of grain could be winnowed in the wind, but larger amounts required a different approach. This

Fig. 5
Harvesting with sickles on a homestead in the 1920s. (Courtesy of Manitoba Archives)
▼

other approach was only possible after the settlers had large barns without ceilings and open to the rafters. This type of barn (*stodola*) made it possible to do the threshing and winnowing inside.

Fig. 6
Cutting wheat with a cradle-scythe at Stuartburn, Man., 1918. (W.J. Sisler Collection 183, courtesy of Manitoba Archives)
▼

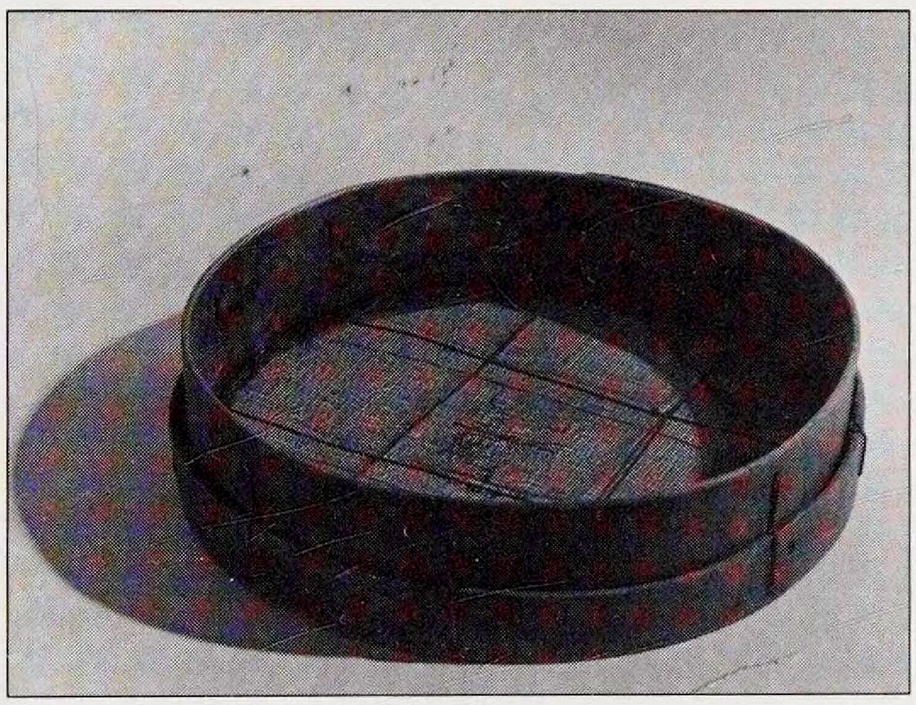


Fig. 7
A riddle or sieve (ryshyto) *brought from Ukraine in 1902. (From the W. Ewanchuk Collection, courtesy of Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature)*
▶

Fig. 8
Winnowing with a riddle, c. 1905. (W.J. Sisler Collection 197, courtesy of Manitoba Archives)
▶

Winnowing

The pioneers brought to Canada two receptacles for cleaning grain: the riddle (a large sieve with a wider wire mesh) and a wooden trough (*netsky*). Both, in time of need, served a dual purpose: the riddle could cover a clucking hen to train it to remain in the nest and hatch the eggs. The wooden trough was used during the trip across the ocean to bathe a baby. Those with round bottoms could also serve as temporary cradles. Flat-bottom wooden troughs were used for kneading dough.

When cleaning a larger amount of grain in the barn, the farmer sat beside a pile and, with a wooden shovel akin to the dustpan, threw shovelfuls of grain and chaff in a broadcasting manner toward the far wall. The heavy grain travelled the farthest away, the chaff fell nearby and the lighter kernels and weed seeds fell in the middle. The good grain was swept together with a broom of burning bush stems and bagged ready for seeding in the spring or for being milled at the mill or on the quern. The other grain was collected for chicken feed and the chaff for feeding the hogs. In Canada, this was the Ukrainian way of separating the wheat from the chaff.

The Quern

The early Ukrainian pioneers often settled far from any flour mill; therefore, they had to depend on their knowledge and skills to process the harvests from their small fields and gardens. Many made querns of their own to grind their grain into coarse flour or meal. These querns were made of stone slabs found nearby.

The quern or hand mill was made of two rounded stone slabs on a wooden base. The upper stone (up to eighteen inches [46 cm] in diameter), encased in a loose frame, had a hole about three inches (8 cm) in diameter at the centre. Handfuls of grain were deposited in this hole while the upper stone was rotated by a short handle; the handle had a metal point inserted in a small hole in the stone. The lower stone was a little smaller in diameter and was tightly encased in a frame, permitting it to move up or down but not to rotate like the upper stone. In the centre of the flat wooden base was a hole, through which a spindle projected to adjust the pressure of the quern. The spindle was raised or lowered by a wedge to increase or decrease the space between the two stones. When the space was small, finer milling was produced; when the space was increased, the milling was coarse. Very large

space was made for husking buckwheat and pearling barley. (Before these grains could be husked, they were dried in the outdoor oven, the *pich*.) As the upper stone rotated, the milling or the husked grain came out through a spout in the upper stone's frame. Flour or meal was then sifted. Husked grain was winnowed with a wooden trough. Winnowing was done by tossing the contents of the trough in a rotary motion: the lighter husks were thus tossed out and the kernels remained. In some cases, farmers cleaned the kernels further by using the riddle.

The quern is generally considered a primitive implement, but it served the settlers in this century well. It allowed them to utilize the fruits of their toil and provide a better diet for the pioneer family.

Not all settlers were able to make a quern; as the number of settlers increased, so did the demand for meal, which made a favoured nutritious bread, *razoway khlib*. To satisfy the demand for coarse rye flour, some Old Country millers built windmills replicating those of Ukraine. Two such windmills were in operation in the Manitoba Interlake region: one at Foley, northwest of Winnipeg Beach, and the other at Meleb, about twelve miles (19 km) northwest of Gimli.

The mill at Foley was built by Toma Radomsky. It had a roof of thatch. A pole was used to move the sails of the mill to face the wind. Since the whole structure had to be rotated on its base, a yoke of oxen did the work.

John Hykaway built the mill at Meleb. The millstones were chipped out of large stones found in his field. The gears were carved out of local spruce, and the sails were boards of local wood. The gears of this mill were not greased, and during operation the groan of the gears and the rumble of the millstone could be heard a mile away. Often the hopper was filled in the evening, and the mill operated throughout the night. By morning the grain was ground. The mill remained on its original base and location until the 1970s, but the appearance of many good power mills in nearby villages had put it into disuse. A new owner sold the mill to a Ukrainian historical group at Winnipeg Beach. Unfortunately, it was "modernized" and made to look like a Dutch windmill.

Bread was often baked in an outdoor oven (*pich*). In most cases the settler had the oven built even before finishing building the house. Some built indoor ovens. Two implements

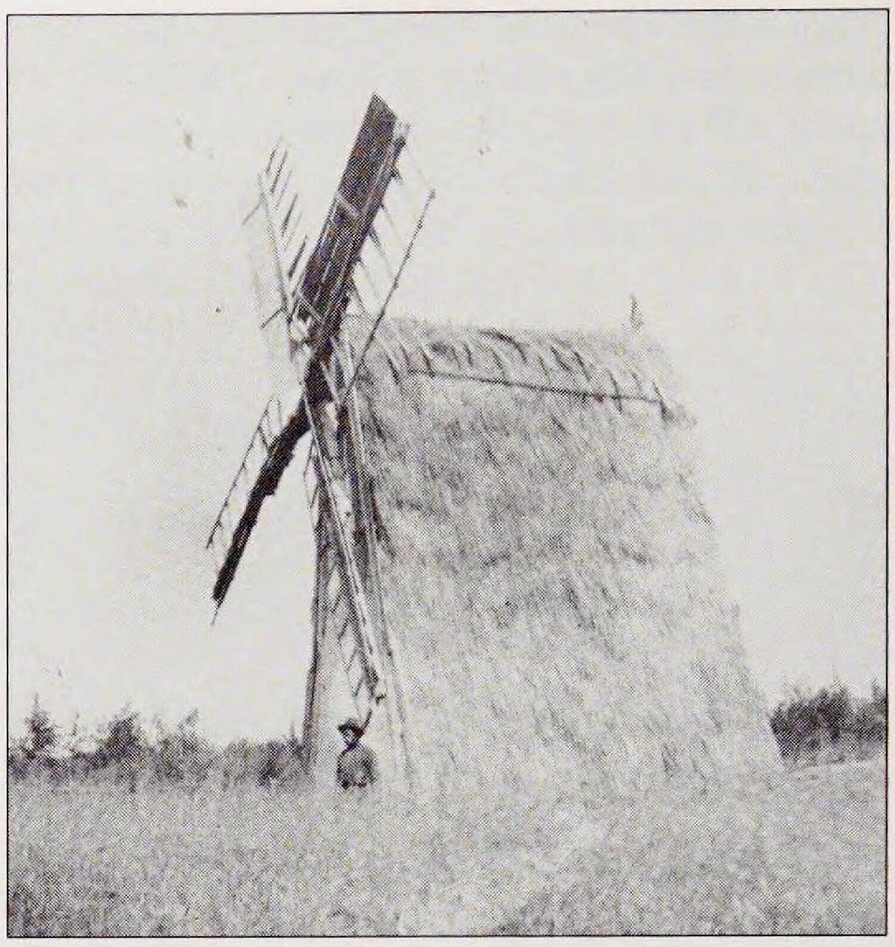


Fig. 9
The Radomsky windmill at Foley, Man., 1908. (W.J. Sisler Collection 1, courtesy of Manitoba Archives)
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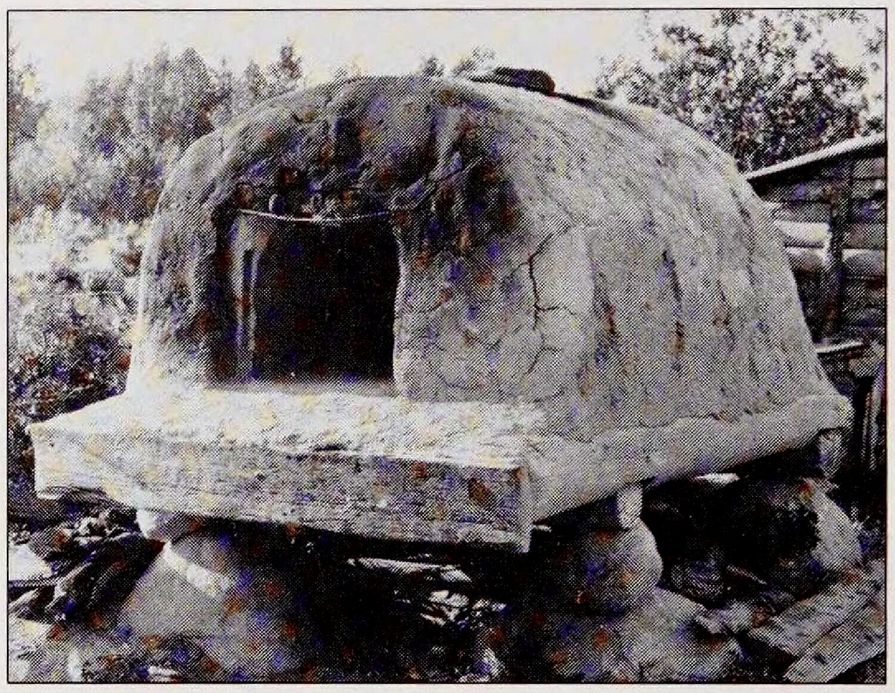

Fig. 10
*An outdoor bake oven (*pich*) at Komarno, Man., c. 1936 (Courtesy of Manitoba Archives*
◀

were used with the bake oven. One was the peel (*lopata*) for inserting the pans into the oven. The other was a type of rake for scraping ashes and coals out of the oven before the pans of bread could be placed in it to bake; it was called the *kotsuba*.

The folk tools and utensils the Ukrainian settlers brought with them to Canada, and the knowledge of how to replicate some of the Old Country tools and equipment, were critical in the life of the early Ukrainian community. Without these, few of the settlers would have succeeded as farmers in the new Canadian environment.

Notes

1. A.J. Hunter, *A Friendly Adventure: A Story of the United Church Mission of Canada, Teulon, Manitoba* (Toronto: Board of Home Missions, 1929), p. 24.

Documenting Ukrainian-Canadian Churches in Alberta

DIANA THOMAS

Ukrainian-Canadian church architecture represents a distinct architectural style familiar to communities across Canada where Ukrainians have settled. In Alberta, Ukrainians established themselves in the Edna–Star district, subsequently moving east and west along the North Saskatchewan River to occupy an area known as the east-central bloc settlement. In this region of Alberta, more than seventy-five Ukrainian-Canadian churches built before 1950 are still in existence. However, as communities dwindle in size, many of these churches risk falling into disrepair and are threatened with demolition. In an effort to document Alberta's remaining Ukrainian churches, the Inventory Programme of the Historic Sites Service, Alberta Department of Culture and Multiculturalism, undertook a survey of the pre-1950 churches in east-central Alberta.[1] The results of the study provide observations on the character of Ukrainian church development in Alberta.

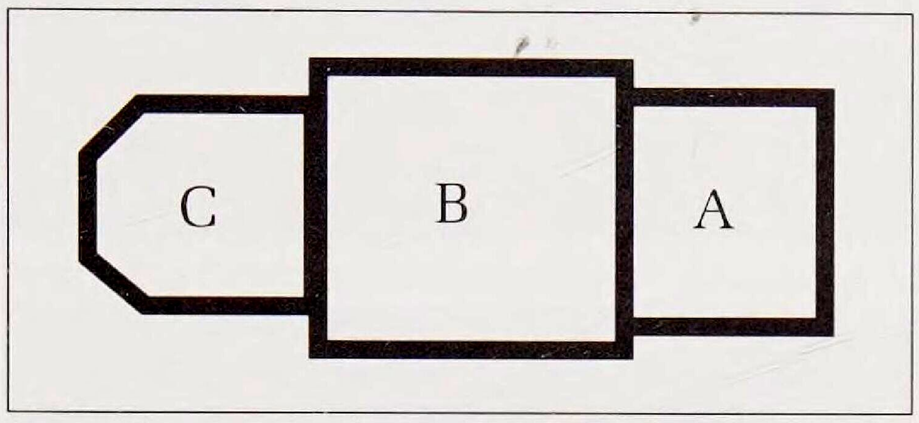

Fig. 1
Typical tripartite plan: A. narthex, B. nave, C. sanctuary.
▶

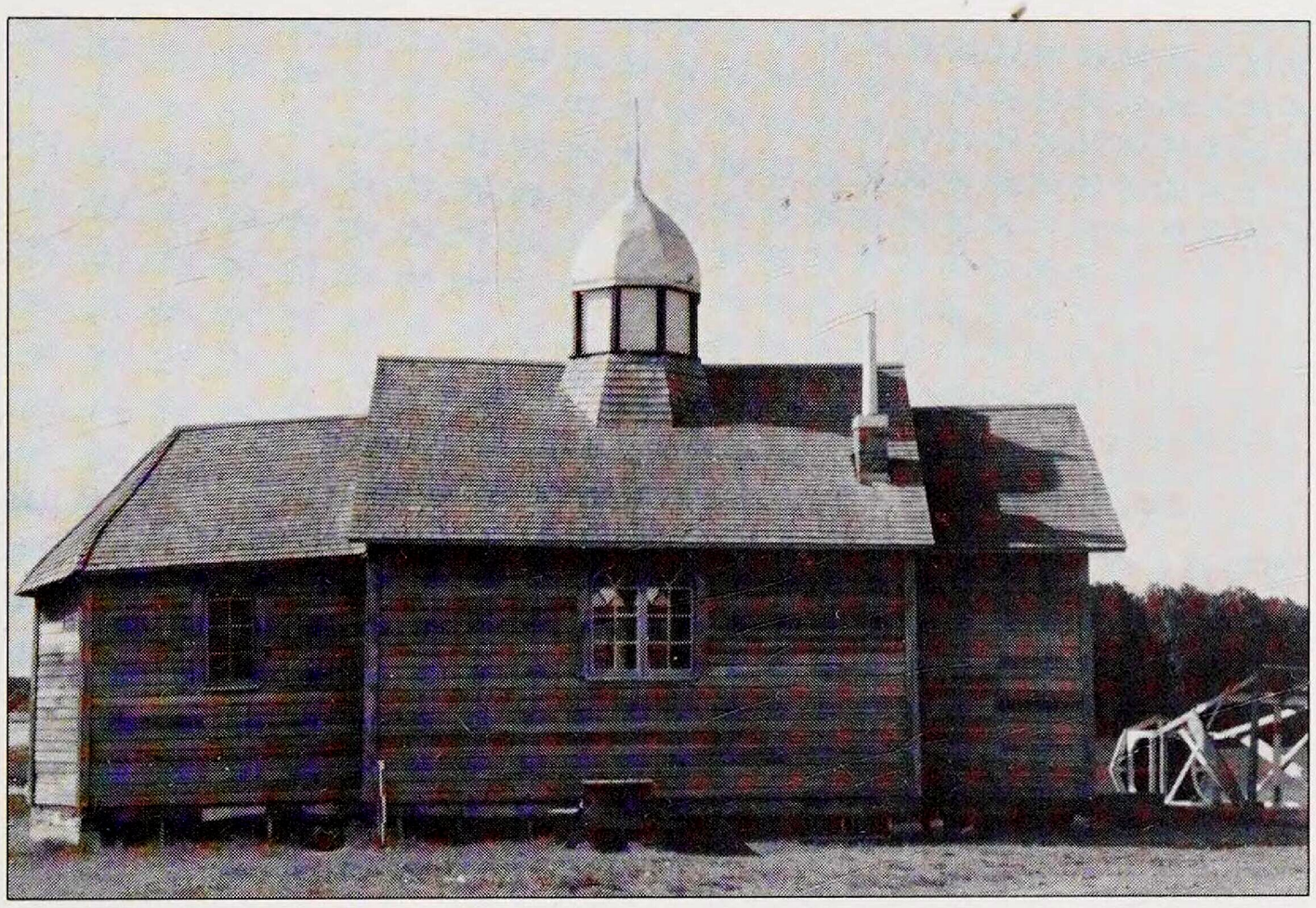

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Fig. 2
St. Nicholas Russo-Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, Edmonton. (All photographs courtesy of Historic Sites Service, Alberta Department of Culture and Multiculturalism)

When Alberta's Ukrainian pioneers arrived, one of the first efforts of the communities was to build a church. The earliest Ukrainian churches were rudimentary structures illustrating the communities' level of economic prosperity and, to some degree, the availability of trained builders. As simple as these early structures may have been, they still satisfied the basic functional needs of the Byzantine rite.[2] They always included a sanctuary and nave so a service could be conducted. In these early churches, as with the ones built later, basic liturgical requirements were met, with a view to maintaining a stylistic and symbolic link to Ukrainian antecedents. Ukrainian church architecture in Alberta clearly drew upon the rich architectural traditions of Ukraine. Historically, this tradition was based upon rural wooden church designs, western European sources and Byzantine elements to create a uniquely Ukrainian style. The study has shown that church styles in Alberta are primarily based on Ukrainian wooden architectural traditions as well as larger, masonry-built Ukrainian baroque churches. However, an examination of this body of Ukrainian-Canadian church architecture clearly illustrates that indigenous trends emerged when architectural forms were transferred to new lands.

The fundamental spatial unit used in the building of wooden structures in Ukraine—a compositional element that influenced the plan of masonry churches as well—is described as the *klit*. The *klit* is generally a four-walled structure constructed of logs laid horizontally one atop the other; less commonly it is a six- or eight-walled structure, the corner ends fitted into position by a variety of interlocking techniques, one of which is *zrub* ("blockwork" or the "log-cabin style").[3] As the dimensions of the log units, which approximate a square, depend on the lengths of timber used, they are rarely longer than 8 metres (about 26 feet) to a side, and most often measure between 5.5 and 6 metres (18 and 20 feet). Typically, the plans of such wooden churches consist of three separate, solid timber units, formed in a three-part linear progression from narthex to nave to sanctuary. The central *klit* of this tripartite plan is normally broader and taller than the two smaller adjacent units on its east and west sides. The tripartite plan, the simplest of the church plans, was commonly reproduced in Alberta (fig. 1). Thirty-three of the extant seventy-five pre-1950 Ukrainian churches in east-central Alberta were built on the tripartite plan, most of which were built before 1918.[4]

The St. Nicholas Russo-Orthodox Church, originally of Kiew, Alberta, and now relocated to the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village just outside Edmonton, was built between 1905 and 1909 (fig. 2). It is one of many tripartite churches that adhere closely to the wooden church models found in western Ukraine. Members of the Russo-Orthodox faith in Canada were predominantly Ukrainians, most of whom came from the historically Greek Orthodox region of Bukovyna.[5] St. Nicholas displays the fundamental characteristics of the tripartite plan. The narthex and nave are covered by separate gable roofs, the narthex roof slightly lower than the broader, central nave. At the east end, the pentagonal apse is also covered by its own roof. A single blind dome or *bania* resting on an octagonal drum is centred on the nave roof, following the Ukrainian practice of placing the dome, when there is only one, on the central unit of the church. Most Greek Orthodox churches in Alberta were built along the traditional east-west axis, with the altar facing east, as the one in St. Nicholas church did when it was constructed.[6] Also typical are the paired windows on the north and south sides of the nave.

Building techniques used in the construction of St. Nicholas are consistent with those found in western Ukraine. The foundation, for example, is built of rocks which prevent the wooden *zrub* from making contact with the ground.[7] This technique was used in other Ukrainian churches in Alberta—such as those found in Waugh, Wostok and Smoky Lake—but concrete and masonry foundations were also common.[8] The walls of St. Nicholas were of squared logs, preferred over split or rounded logs in the Carpathian mountain regions and many parts of Galicia.[9] The interlocking corner joints were dovetailed and the logs were pinned together with wooden pegs throughout their lengths for greater stability.[10] The builders of St. Nicholas not only adhered to traditional construction techniques, but also used the basic proportions of their European models. The 5.4-by-6-metre (about 17 by 20 feet) nave of the church is virtually identical to the 5.5-by-6-metre (about 18 by 20 feet) measurement traditionally found in the Carpathian regions.[11]

Ukrainian-Canadian church design shares with its European-Ukrainian predecessors the distinctive feature of a separate belltower. The development of a belltower detached from the body of the church can be traced back to the watchtowers that were a defensive element of most fortified towns and villages in Ukraine.

▲
Fig. 3
Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Paroskovia, Downing.

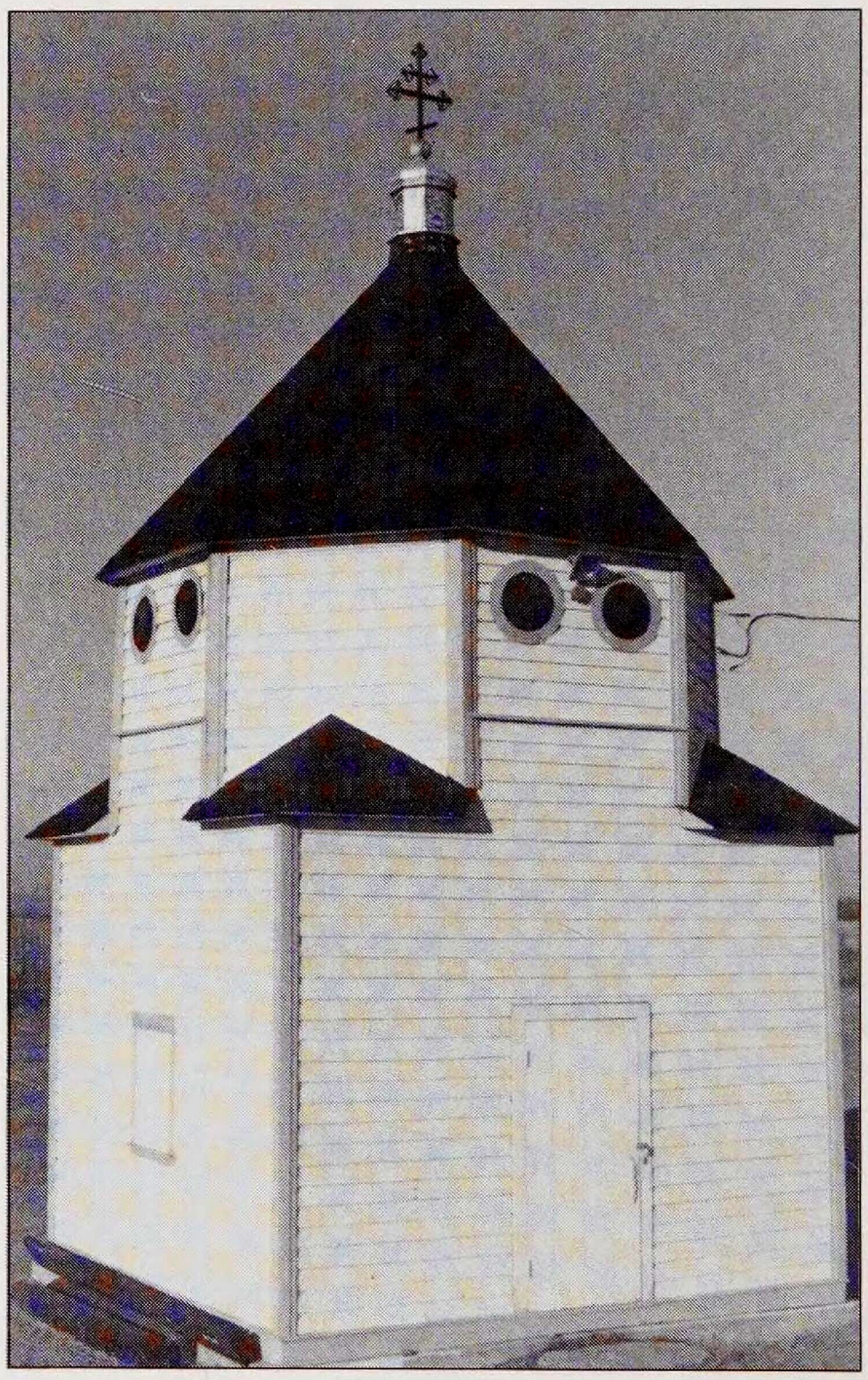

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Fig. 4
Belltower of St. Pokrova, Edwand.

As part of the fortification, the belltower was traditionally built using a timber frame, rather than a log-built *zrub* technique. This Ukrainian tradition is consistent with the belltowers that appear with Ukrainian-Canadian churches. The belltowers are generally square, clad with boards fitted vertically and capped by a second-storey covered or enclosed gallery

where the bell is placed. In 1908, a simple "belltower" consisting of two horizontal logs set on posts was built west of the sanctuary of the St. Nicholas Russo-Orthodox Church,[12] and a bell mounted on it. This effort to create the spirit of the belltower was modestly improved in 1911 and 1912 with the erection of four tall inclining timbers with a bell placed at their apex.[13]

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Paroskovia, constructed between 1921 and 1924 in Downing (fig. 3), illustrates the visible similarities and subtle differences of the tripartite plan in Alberta. It boasts three small cupolas surmounted by a galvanized dome, one centred on each of the three units corresponding to narthex, nave and sanctuary. The paired north and south nave windows correspond in shape, size and placement to those found in wooden church designs in Ukraine. Continuity of tradition is also seen in the use of prominent overhanging eaves. Originally developed to protect walls and foundations from the heavy rains typical of the foothill regions of Ukraine, the broad eaves are a feature that, in Ukrainian-Canadian churches, was motivated by stylistic and traditional, rather than practical, concerns. Though convenient, wide eaves are hardly a necessity in Alberta, as they are in Ukraine.

The builder of the church of St. Paroskovia also incorporated an architectural element often found in Ukrainian-style wooden churches in Europe and Canada. The *krylo* or porch found on the west end of some churches may be supported by wooden columns or may simply be an unsupported hood over the door.

Fig. 5
Russo Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas, Desjarlais.
▼

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of St. Pokrova in Edwand, like St. Nicholas and St. Paroskovia, has a separate frame and clapboard belltowers. The tower adjacent to St. Pokrova reveals a further variation derived from Ukrainian sources (fig. 4), one seen in several Alberta churches. The second storey of this square tower is an octagon with a conical roof. The transition from a square base to an octagon results in tetrahedrons, referred to as "sails," at the four top corners of the square base.[14]

Within the tripartite church format, the octagonal *klit* on a square base is an architectural motif sometimes used in the construction of a broader central unit. It was often a hallmark of the Podillian School, which was particularly widespread in the regions of Podillia and Volhynia, both areas that border on Galician and Bukovynian ethnic territories.[15] Sails again appear at the transition point from the square base to the octagonal drum. One example of this style is the Russo-Orthodox Church of St. Nicholas built in Desjarlais in 1917 (fig. 5). The octagonal central *klit* was technically more difficult to construct and more elaborate in its effect. The open octagonal extends the height of the interior space while creating new and complex interior spatial dimensions, characteristic of Ukrainian baroque architecture. In addition, the towering central *klit* is capped by a blind dome placed on a tall octagonal drum, further defying the horizontality of the linear plan. When the second-tier central *klit* is used, it is generally pierced by a window centred above the pair of windows on the lower north and south nave walls. To further enhance the exterior decorative scheme, blind windows were built into the cupolas of some.

Many parishes outgrew their first churches fifteen to twenty years after settlement of the area, due to the arrival of new Ukrainian immigrants. A growing population base allowed church executives to consider expansion of the existing structure or construction of a new church. Most parishes chose the latter option, and after 1909, the large five-part or cruciform church plan began to appear.[16] Over half (thirty-nine) of the extant seventy-five pre-1950 Ukrainian churches in the study area were built on a cruciform plan. The five-part, or cruciform, church design consisted of the linear tripartite pattern with two octagonal or square units attached to the north and south sides of the central nave (fig. 6). The essential

difference between the tripartite and cruciform plans is in the addition to these north and south arms. Concomitantly, an increase in the number of domes—up to nine—could embellish the grander architectural scheme.

An excellent example of the five-part plan, one without the Gothic pointed windows sometimes used elsewhere, is the church near the neighbouring communities of Wostok and St. Michael (fig. 7). St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church was constructed of brick in 1923, making it the only brick church in the area at that time. The north and south arms more closely approximate the dimensions of the nathex and sanctuary than the shallow proportions of those built elsewhere. The builder also placed three large cupolas along the main axis, a scheme characteristic of Ukrainian churches in which more than one dome was employed. The galvanized domes are uniquely Ukrainian, as the widest part of each dome does not extend beyond its base. The St. Nicholas Church clearly illustrates a characteristic of Ukrainian-Canadian church architecture: when approaching the west entrance, a distinct triple-tiered, step-up effect is achieved with the successively taller enclosed porch, narthex and narthex cupola.

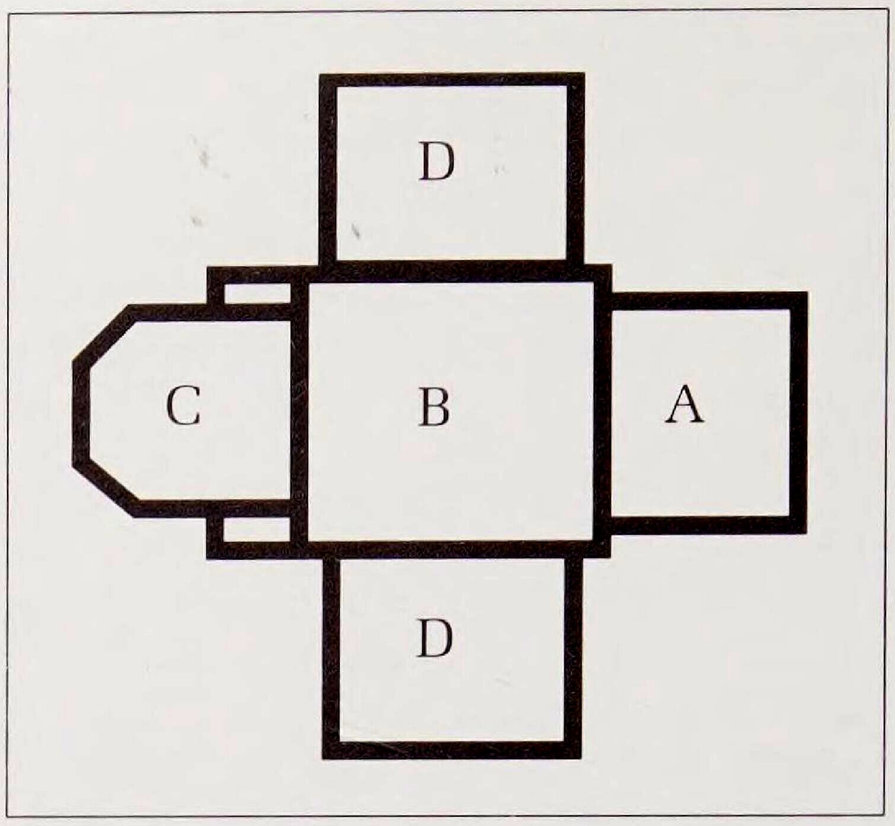

Fig. 6
Typical cruciform church plan: A. narthex, B. nave, C. sanctuary, D. transepts.
◀

The cruciform plan is most prevalent in Volhynia and the Kiev and Hutsul regions of Ukraine, whereas churches based on the tripartite plan dominate Galicia and Bukovyna. Although Ukrainians in Canada are predominantly from the latter two regions, regional architectural styles in Ukraine were not necessarily confined to any given region.[17] The relatively close proximity of the Hutsuls to the Bukovynians (the Hutsul region lies northwest

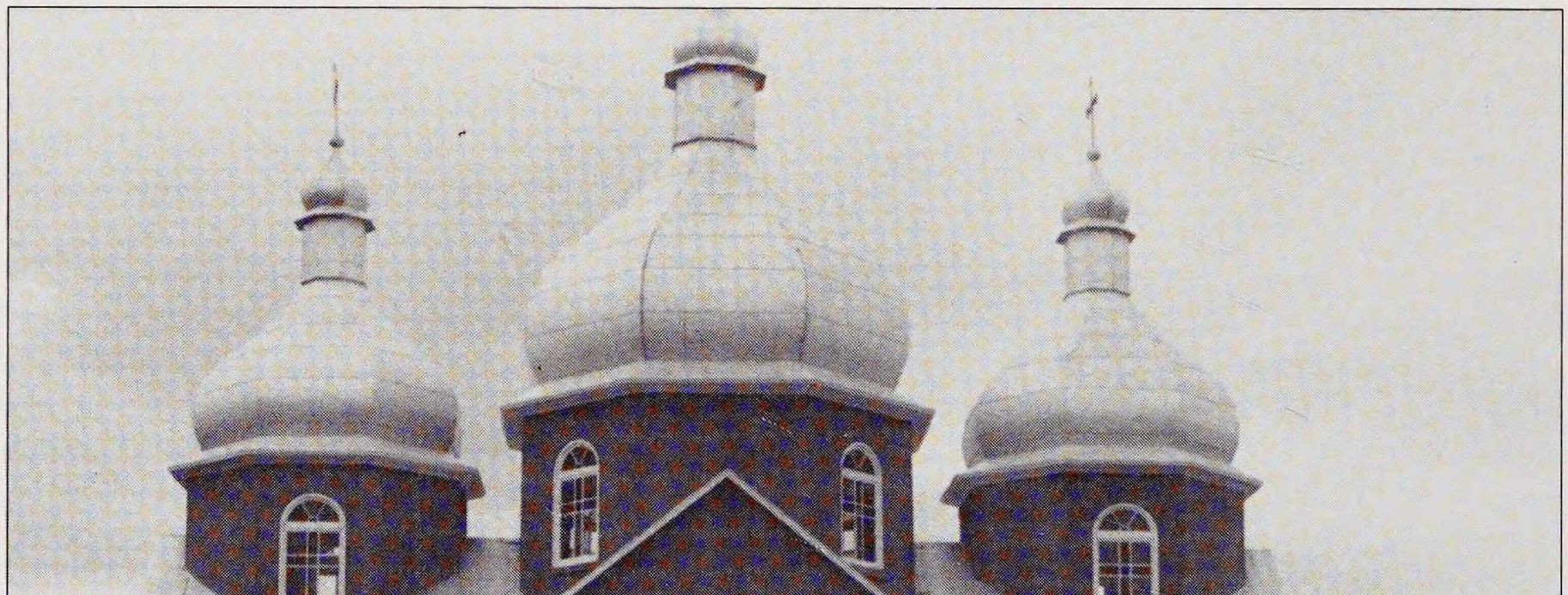

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Fig. 7
St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church, St. Michael.

Fig. 8
Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity, Plain Lake.
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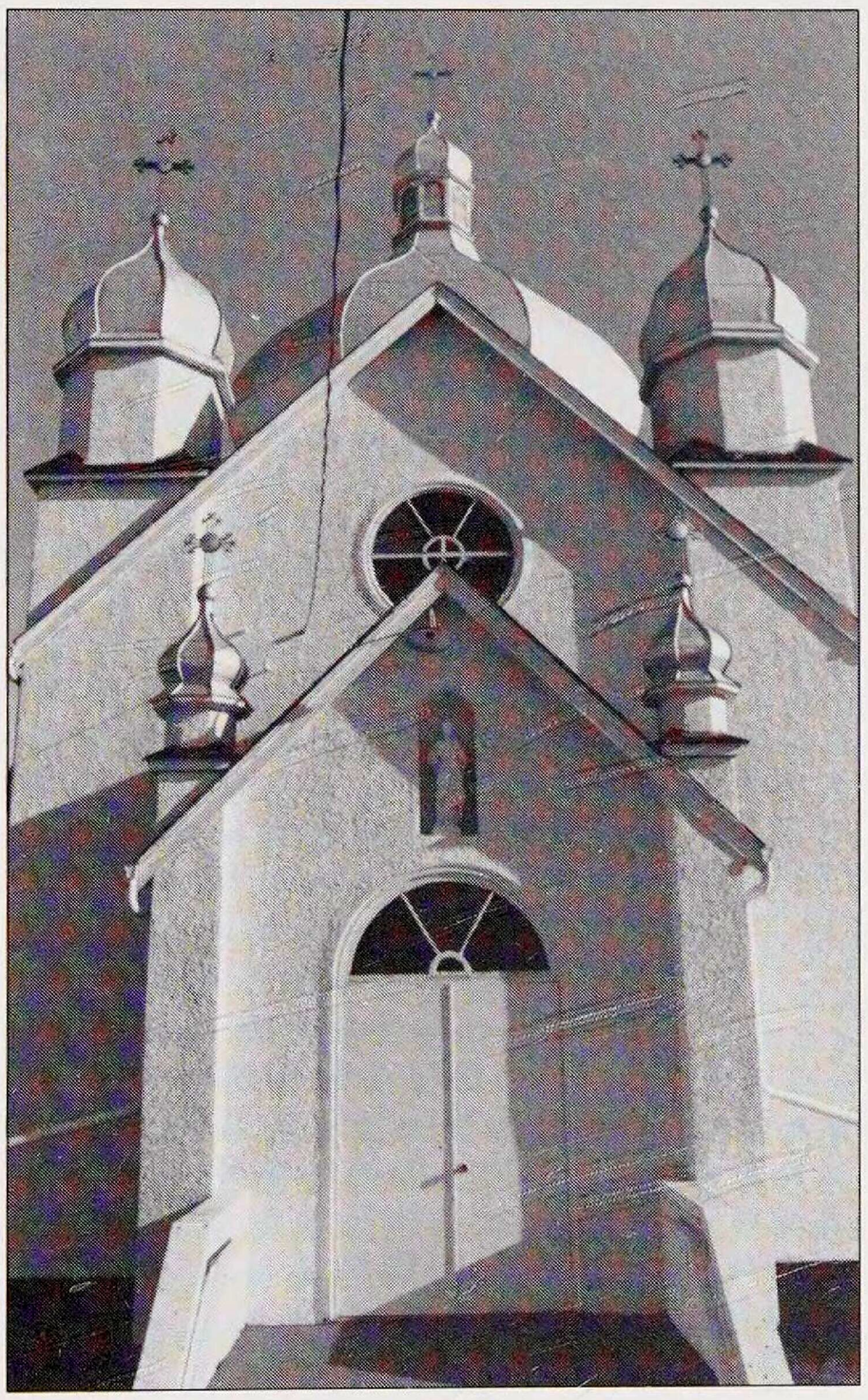

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Fig. 9
Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. John the Baptist, Borschiw.

of Bukovyna along the Carpathian mountain range) explains the assimilation of the five-part plan in that region. As well, many examples of Hutsul-style churches can also be cited throughout Galicia and the rest of the Carpathian region.[18]

One feature of Ukrainian churches in Alberta is more difficult to trace back to origins in Ukraine. On either side of the entryway at the west end of both wooden and masonry (including frame and stucco) churches are tall, narrow towers, usually capped by small domes. This motif is unquestionably linked to the influence of western European baroque architecture in Ukraine during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The curved and undulating facades and the twin-towered west fronts of baroque church architecture had a significant impact on Ukrainian masonry architecture. On the Canadian Prairies, however, the twin-tower motif assumes a unique form in many church designs, one that has no direct parallels in Ukraine. It can be seen in many Ukrainian-style churches in Alberta, such as the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Holy Trinity in Plain Lake, built in 1926 (fig. 8).

A precedent for these facade towers can be traced to local French-Canadian church designs, which also attempted to reproduce in wood the classical baroque facades of Europe. Ukrainian Catholics had been advised by their own church authorities in the Old Country to accept the aid of the Canadian Roman Catholic Church until their own was organized and incorporated.[19] In Alberta, French-Canadian Catholics were prominent in the organization of the Catholic church, the activities of which extended into rural areas. It is not surprising, therefore, that local French-Canadian architectural models found their way into Ukrainian church designs. Ukrainians, however, attached domes to the tops of their towers instead of the classicized French-Canadian *clochers*.

As Ukrainian communities became more established in Alberta in the 1930s, frame and stucco construction was often used by builders of Ukrainian churches. It was a technique that had few precedents in Ukraine, so builders often imitated the French-inspired, twin-tower, five-part churches developed by earlier Ukrainian Canadians. The Ukrainian Catholic Church of St. John the Baptist in Borschiw (fig. 9), constructed in 1939, is a large-scale, five-part frame and stucco design that illustrates the assimilation of the twin-tower motif. The builder freely interpreted the motif

by adding another pair of smaller towers to the enclosed porch. Consistent with most clapboard-sided churches, the stucco structures were white. Vertical members capping the corners of the wooden-sided churches were often painted in a contrasting colour, a device that emphasized the verticality of the church and clearly defined each architectural unit. This contrasting element was absent from the stucco-covered church.

Some of the Ukrainian churches in Alberta use a twin-tower motif that more closely approximates the proportions of Ukrainian baroque masonry architecture. St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church, constructed in Lamont in 1947, and the Holy Trinity Ukrainian Orthodox church in Calmar built in 1927–28 are two examples of church designs modelled on the majestic baroque style. Both churches are of frame and stucco construction and are based on the cruciform plan. The towers of St. John the Baptist are much broader than those of other Ukrainian churches in Alberta. The towers are capped by tall cupolas of western European baroque design, a type frequently incorporated into Ukrainian baroque masonry churches. The bold towers and the unique placement of the five cupolas of Holy Trinity also suggest an attempt to imitate the characteristics of Ukrainian baroque masonry architecture. In wooden church architecture, domes were placed axially, but here the five large domes are placed on the diagonals of the church plan.[20] The largest is centred on the nave end and the remaining four on the four corner towers, indicating that a stone church, not one of logs, was the architectural source.

Perhaps the only church design in Alberta to capture the true spirit and splendour of Ukrainian baroque masonry architecture is the one executed by the Reverend Philip Ruh for St. Josaphat's Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral in Edmonton (fig. 10). Constructed between 1939 and 1944, the church is based on the largest of the Ukrainian baroque schemes, a nine-part plan with the addition of four smaller square units occupying the angles between the arms. Though the original plan called for ten domes, only seven were built (those on the north and south arms and over the sanctuary were eliminated). The west front portico, supported by eight Tuscan columns, is approached by a grand 9-metre (30-foot) wide staircase, a feature illustrating that the impact of the Italian baroque style in western regions of Ukraine was not overlooked by Ruh. St. Josaphat's is the product of a skilled architect, unlike those constructed by local builders in many rural communities in Alberta. Ruh's professional training and financial backing allowed him to focus on more ambitious architectural schemes of Ukrainian origin. He managed to convey a sense of historical continuity within a Ukrainian architectural tradition. Yet, like many wooden churches in Alberta's rural communities, St. Josaphat's is not a slavish copy of a church in Ukraine.

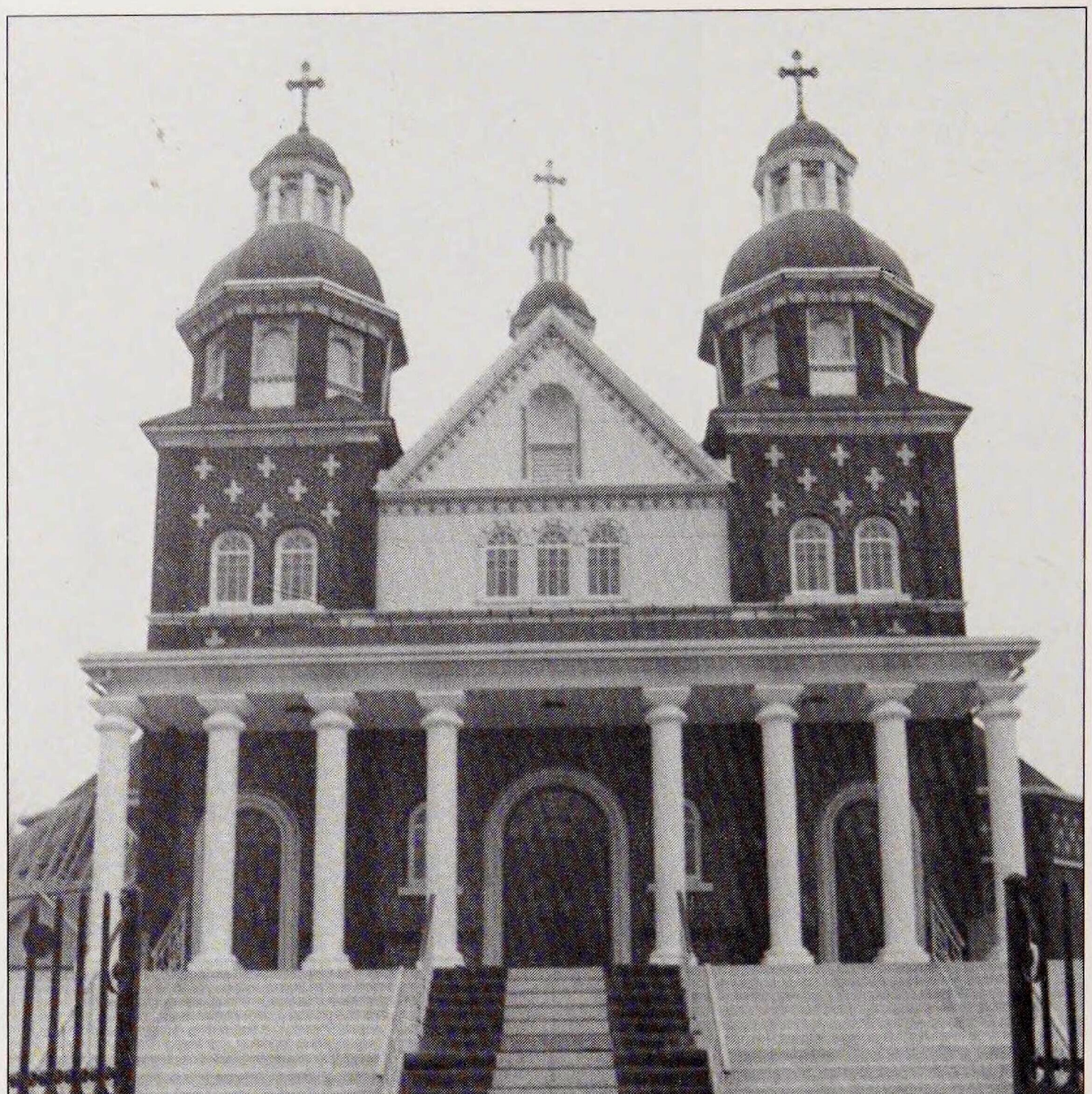

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Fig. 10
St. Josaphat's Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral, Edmonton.

Ukrainian church architecture represents a significant measure of the cultural landscape in Alberta. These churches are vital and living reminders of the connection between the old and the new, and of the way Ukrainians have shaped the land to reflect their heritage. The systematic documentation of pre-1950 Ukrainian churches in Alberta was the first of its

kind in the province. With the aid of a growing body of photographic records and historical data, a greater awareness of the specific contribution of a local Ukrainian architectural tradition is possible. Such a heightened understanding of these sites will govern the identification of significant churches and lead to their preservation in the future.

Notes

1. Results of the study appear in Jaroslaw Iwanus, "Pre-1950 Ukrainian Churches in East Central Alberta: An Architectural Survey" (Unpublished report, Alberta Department of Culture and Multiculturalism, Historic Sites Service, 1988).
2. Radomir B. Bilash, "Peter Lipinski: Prairie Church Artist," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* 13, no. 1 (March 1988): pp. 8–14.
3. John Hvozda, ed., *Wooden Architecture of the Ukrainian Carpathians* (New York, N.Y.: Lemko Research Foundation, 1978), p. 54.
4. Iwanus, "Pre-1950 Ukrainian Churches," p. 28.
5. When Ukrainians arrived in Canada, there were no Ukrainian Orthodox priests to organize their religious communities. Orthodox Ukrainians therefore accepted the religious administration offered by the Russian Greek Orthodox Church. They continued to acknowledge the authority of the Russo-Greek Orthodox Church until 1918, when the independent Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada was formed. See Paul Yuzyk, *The Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada 1981–1951* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1981), pp. 85–86.
6. Nestor Nahachevsky and Andrii Nahachevsky, "The St. Nicholas Russo-Orthodox Church, Kiew, Alberta: Structural History Report," Alberta Department of Culture and Multiculturalism, Historic Sites Service, Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, 1985.
7. Ibid., p. 239. Another popular method of creating a foundation was sinking posts vertically into the ground to form corner stanchions, see Hvozda, *Wooden Architecture*, p. 55.
8. Nahachevsky and Nahachevsky, *The St. Nicholas Russo-Orthodox Church*, pp. 242–43.
9. Hvozda, *Wooden Architecture*, p. 55.
10. Nahachevsky and Nahachevsky, *The St. Nicholas Russo-Orthodox Church*, p. 151.
11. Ibid., p. 239; Hvozda, *Wooden Architecture*, p. 55.
12. Nahachevsky and Nahachevsky, *The St. Nicholas Russo-Orthodox Church*, p. 106.
13. Ibid., pp. 109–11.
14. B. Solowij, ed., *Architecture of Ukrainian Churches*, trans. W. Motyka (Catalogue for a travelling exhibition organized by the Association of Ukrainians in South Australia, n.d.), pp. 72–73.
15. Members of these subcultural groups who settled in Canada at the turn of the century came from the provinces of Galicia and Bukovyna in the Austo-Hungarian Empire, hence they were called Galicians and Bukovynians. For the purpose of this paper, however, the term "Galician" refers to those persons from the Ukrainian ethnic territories of the Austrian province of Galicia (so-called eastern Galicia) and does not include individuals from the Lemko, Hutsul and Boiko regions of the Carpathian Mountains. The term "Galicia" refers to the area from which these inhabitants came.
16. Iwanus, "Pre-1950 Ukrainian Churches," p. 28.
17. Political boundaries in Ukrainian ethnic territories changed dramatically throughout history, encouraging cultural exchange among regional subcultures. For instance, the region of the northern Bukovyna constituted a part of Kievan Rus between the tenth and twelfth centuries. From the thirteenth century to the first half of the fourteenth century, it was part of the Galician–Volhynian state. In the second half of the fourteenth century it was annexed by the principality of Moldavia. In the sixteenth century, it came under the overlordship of the Ottoman Empire. It was taken over in 1774 by Austria and incorporated administratively with Galicia until 1849. In 1861, it became a separate crown land within the Austrian Empire until 1918, whereupon it became part of Romania. Solowij, *Architecture of Ukrainian Churches*, p. 122.
18. In David Buxton, *The Wooden Churches of Eastern Europe, An Introductory Survey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), the author identifies several examples in Vorokhta, Rivne, Iasinia and Pidhirtsi, pp. 115–21.
19. See T.C. Byrne, "The Ukrainian Community in North Central Alberta" (Unpublished MA thesis, University of Alberta, 1937).
20. Buxton, *Wooden Churches of Eastern Europe*, p. 188.

Ukrainian Grave Markers in East-Central Alberta

BOHDAN MEDWIDSKY

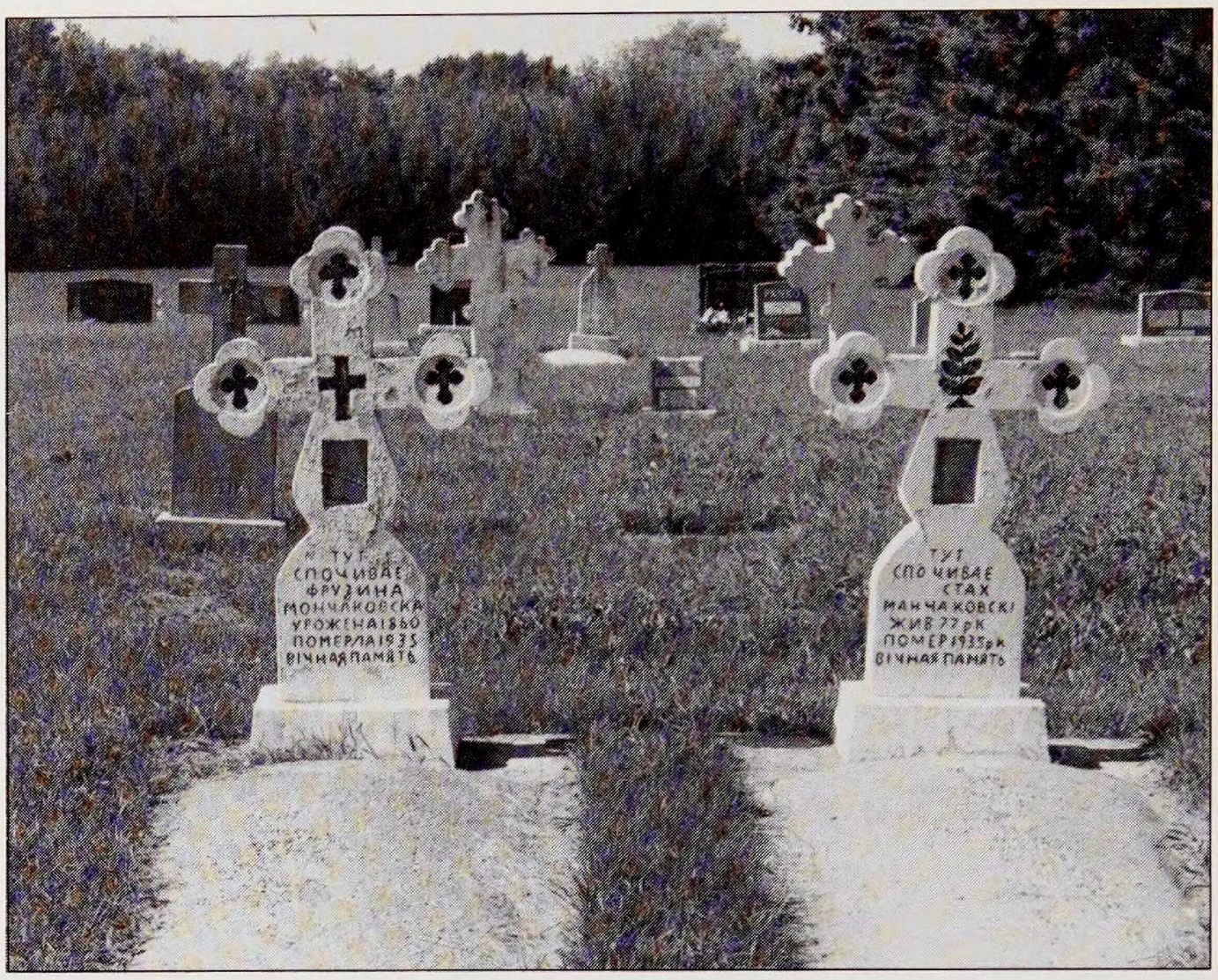
There are many more traditional rural Ukrainian-Canadian graveyards in east-central Alberta than there are studies dealing with them.[1] The Ukrainian proverb "zhyvyi zhyve hadaie" ("a live person thinks of live things") is probably the best explanation for this state of affairs. On the other hand, as R.B. Klymasz demonstrated in the documentary film *Luchak's Easter*, a cemetery can be a lively place.[2] Although one could attempt to find a single representative Ukrainian-Canadian prairie graveyard in east-central Alberta, it is probably more prudent to deal with three types of this aspect of Ukrainian-Canadian material culture to reflect the historical dominance of the three religious denominations (of the traditional Eastern or Byzantine rite) to which Ukrainian settlers in Canada belong.[3]

One of the oldest Ukrainian burial grounds in east-central Alberta is at Skaro (near Bruderheim) just north of Highway 45 (some seventy kilometres northeast of Edmonton). It is an excellent example of jurisdictional differences, as about two-thirds of the cemetery belong to the Greek Catholic Parish of the Holy and Lifegiving Cross and the remaining third to the Russian-Orthodox Parish of the Holy Ascension.[4] Another pioneer graveyard is that of St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Parish at Szypenitz near Hairy Hill (again, north of Highway 45). This cemetery originally came under Russian-Orthodox jurisdiction. Here, however, the community decided to switch from Russian to Ukrainian orthodoxy. Although many Ukrainian pioneer cemeteries in Alberta could have served to demonstrate the religious material culture of Ukrainian settlers, the two cemeteries at Skaro and the Szypenitz graveyard constitute a representative sample.

Common Features

Certain aspects of Ukrainian religious material culture occur in all three graveyards: headstone or marker forms; ornamentation; the language of inscriptions; and viability or upkeep of the burial grounds.

The earliest forms of markers used in pioneer graveyards were wooden crosses, of which only remnants can be found today. The demise of the wooden marker was not only due to gradual deterioration but was also hastened during the annual spring cleaning; remnants of the previous year's wilted turf and underbrush were burned, destroying many a wooden marker.[5]



▲ ***Fig. 1***
Two trifoliate cement crosses at the Holy Cross Ukrainian Catholic cemetery, Skaro. The central tree-like ornament on the cross on the right is a traditional and archaic "tree of life" symbol.
(All photographs by Roslana Moroz)

The most common grave-marker form found in the burial grounds of each of the three religious denominations is the trifoliate or botonée cross (figs. 1 and 2).[6] These trifoliate cement markers were poured into forms supported by crossed metal bars. They continued to be placed in the cemeteries as late as the 1950s.

Another feature common to Ukrainian-Canadian cemeteries is the decoration on the burial markers, usually executed in relief. Although not as pervasive as the cement markers, these ornamentations are frequently encountered. Images with the oldest historical roots include five- and six-pointed stars and floral symbols. Some of the older plant-shaped symbols may even be related to the cosmogonic "tree of life." Crosses of various forms are often used as ornamental and symbolic signs in the central part or on the arms of cross-shaped markers. The symbol of the victory of Christianity over Islam is a crescent at the foot of some crosses (fig. 3). The relief of Christ hanging on the cross is characteristic of Western spiritual tradition. Such reliefs are more to be expected at Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery, but can be found on gravemarkers in the two Orthodox graveyards as well.

Fig. 2
Traditional trifoliate cement cross, ornamented with a Latin cross and floral designs, at St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox cemetery, Szypenitz.

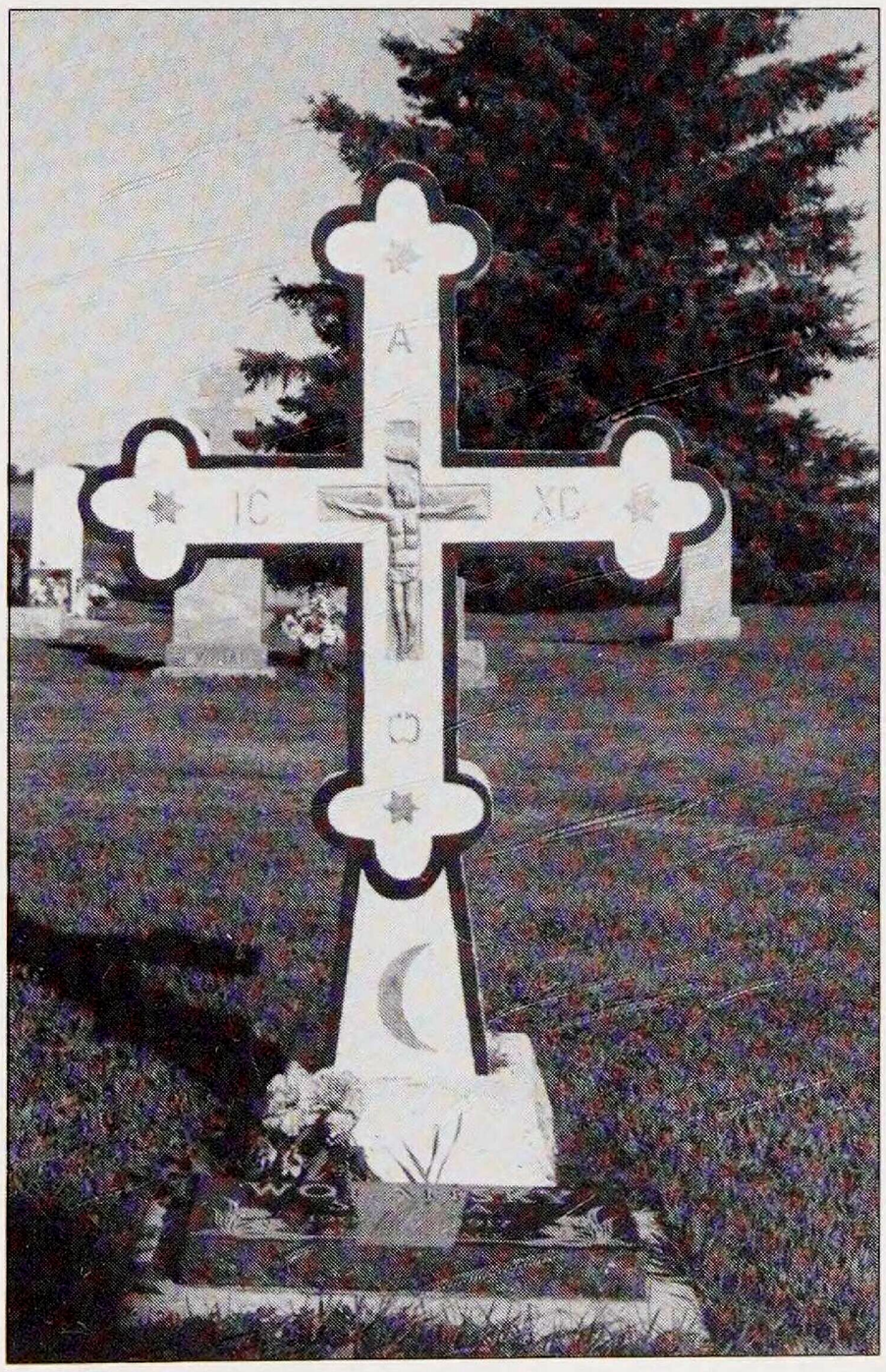


Fig. 3
Traditional trifoliate cement cross plus modern stone lawn marker at Holy Ascension Russian-Orthodox cemetery, Skaro. The cross is ornamented with a Christ figure, six-pointed stars and a crescent symbolizing triumph over Islam.

Christian symbolism is also found in the inscriptions on the markers. Abbreviations come somewhere in the middle between ornamentation and inscriptions. The letters "IC," "XC," "A" and "Ω" standing for "Jesus," "Christ," "the Beginning" and "the End," are the most common abbreviations on the markers (see fig. 3).

Ukrainian is the language used in many of the inscriptions in all three graveyards. Bilingual (Ukrainian and English) inscriptions appear on some headstones, and others are English only. Personal names sometimes appear in Ukrainian and English versions. In one instance, the metal plate attached to the back of the headstone gives the vital statistics of the deceased almost identically in both Ukrainian and English, the English version having additional information on the time and port of entry into Canada as well as the man's homestead section. Inscriptions exclusively in English can be found on markers of more recent origin.

The efforts of successive generations of Ukrainian pioneer stock to join and keep up with mainstream Canadian society are reflected in the decreasing maintenance of these graveyards, in both physical upkeep and viability. As smaller family farms become a thing of the past and the prairie population moves to the cities, the future of rural cemeteries comes into question. Recent graves, new headstones and discussion with local inhabitants confirm that burials of individuals with strong local ties still take place in these cemeteries, albeit less often.

Differences

Just as there are common denominators indicating shared culture, so are there two issues clearly differentiating the three graveyards. One of these differences reflects the formal religious denominations and the other, language.

The religious division between the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic denominations is clearly demonstrated by later cement and stone markers. What shall be termed here the "Orthodox cross" is distinctly recognizable as part of the headstone, the form of the marker itself, a decoration over the grave marker (see fig.4) or even a decoration on the grave mound in the two Orthodox burial grounds.[7] Latin-style crosses and symbolism have the same function at the Ukrainian Catholic cemetery. Of course, this Catholic-Orthodox dichotomy is not without exceptions. Some markers within Orthodox graveyards reflect the typology of Western Christianity, and vice versa.[8]

The linguistic differentiation is not as clear cut as that of the cross types. Old Church Slavic used to be the lingua franca of official church services at the time of Ukrainian-Canadian pioneer settlements. Ukrainian became the official language of the newly formed Ukrainian Greek Orthodox Church of Canada, though St. Mary's Parish did not officially switch to Ukrainian Orthodoxy until 1941.[9] The Ukrainian Greek Catholics used Old Church Slavic in official church services until the late 1960s, when they switched to Ukrainian. (Ukrainian had always been used as the vernacular among Ukrainian Catholics during sermons and other non-official activities.) In Russian Orthodox communities, Old Church Slavic is still the language of official services. The language of the community seems to have been Ukrainian with an admixture of Russian. This variety of language use can be observed in some of the headstone inscriptions.

Other Considerations

Many more characteristics of the three graveyards could be explored. Some individual grave sites warrant further research: For example, what brought about the belated attaching of the metal plate on the marker noted earlier? Originally, the stone was not elaborately inscribed, but the metal plate includes not only the personal information on the deceased, but also contemporary Soviet administrative territorial terminology and even a spelling correction of the surname. A monument at St. Mary's cemetery worth further investigation is the chapel-style marker on the Mehara family plot; a certificate of service in the army of the Austrian Emperor Franz-Joseph is visible through a glass window in the door of the chapel. Nearby, a diminutive Orthodox cross made of twigs stands beside a little pile of pebbles with an artificial flower at the southeastern fence of St. Mary's cemetery (fig. 5), reflecting ecclesiastic and community rules that applied to the burial of suicidal deaths, rules that were once strictly applied.[10]

In other instances, individual or group language loss seems to be partially compensated by some ornamental symbol of ethnic identity, such as the neo-traditional geometric "cross-stitch" design. And even modern markers sometimes reflect traditional sex roles, as is clearly the case in the depiction of knitting needles and a ball of yarn on one side of a spousal grave marker, and a convertible automobile on the other.[11]

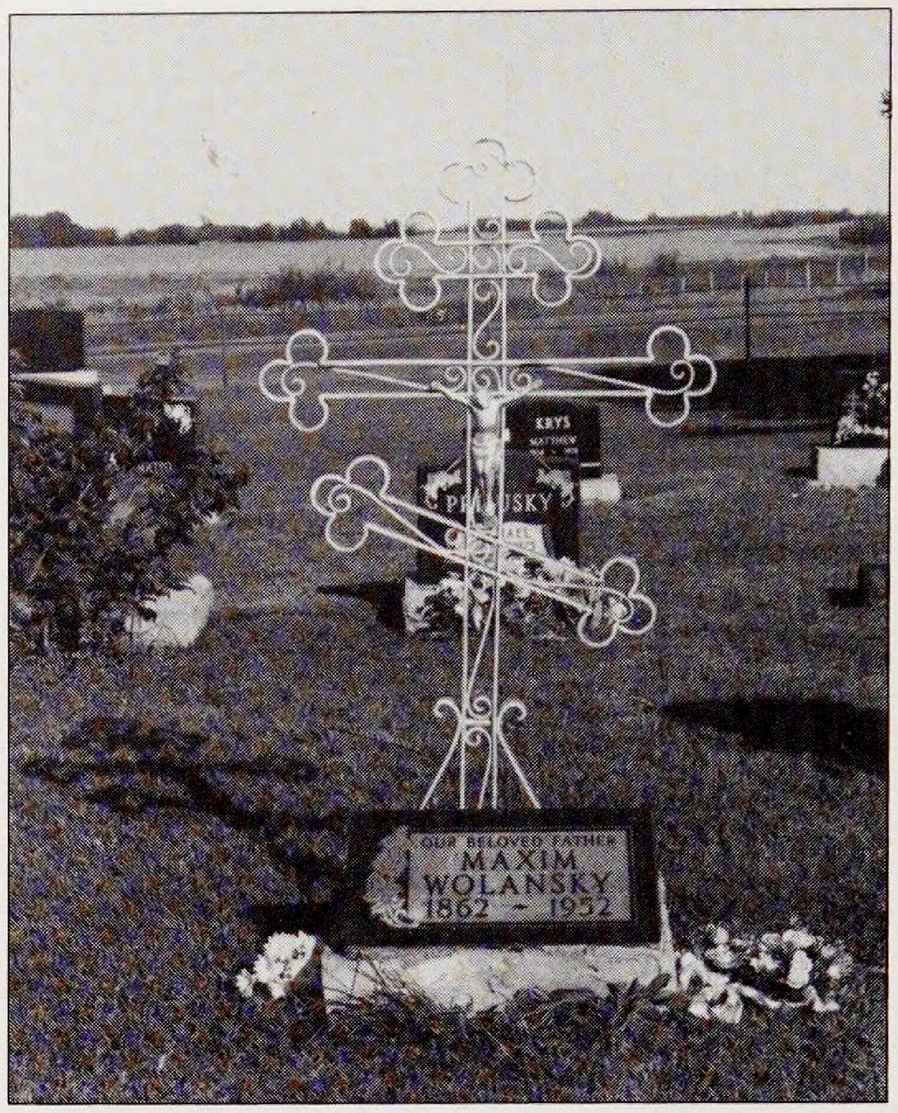
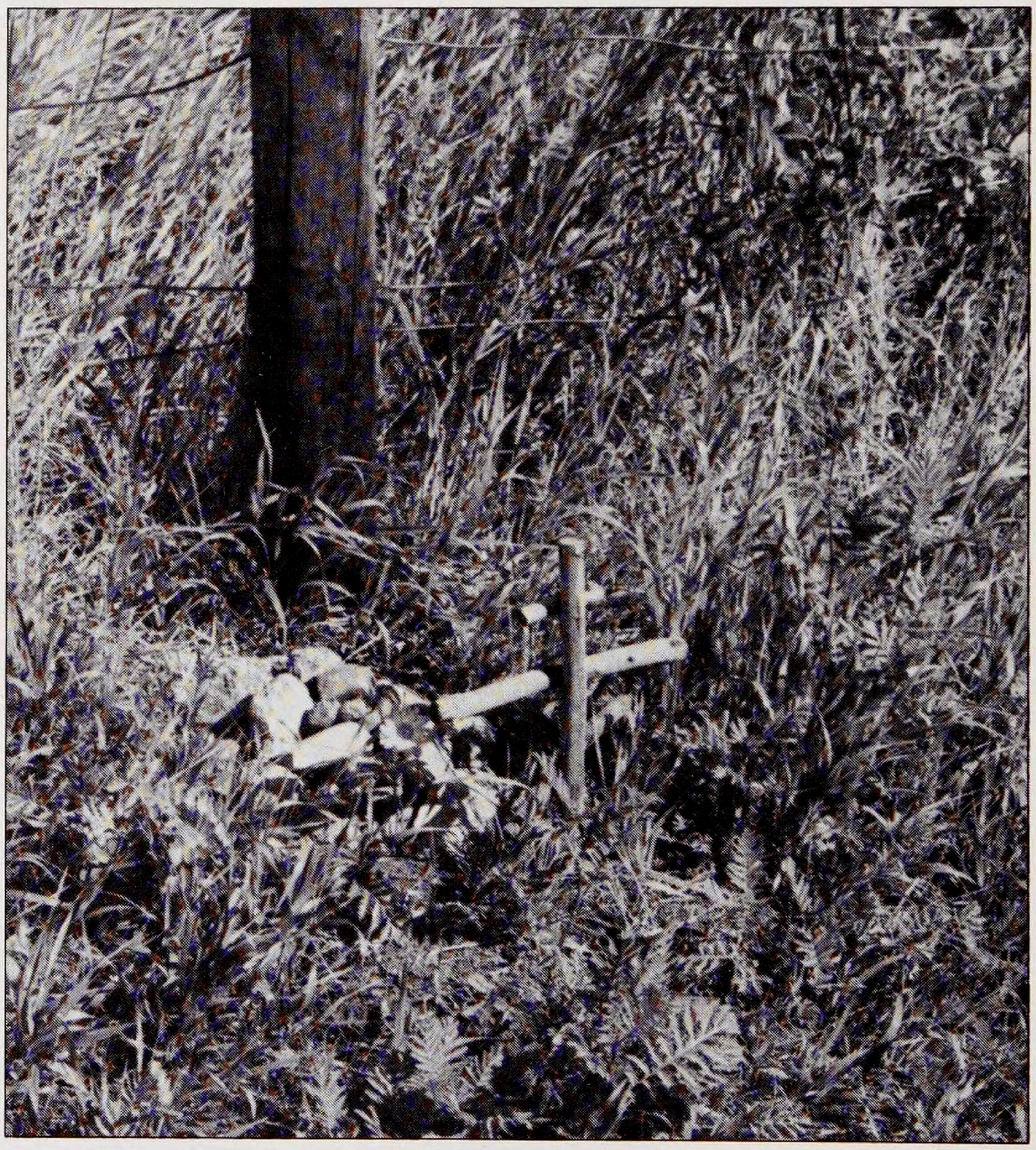


Fig. 4
Metal Orthodox cross marker at Holy Ascension Russian-Orthodox cemetery, Skaro. The statuette of the crucified Christ is of Western spiritual tradition, but the Orthodox cross is clearly of Eastern heritage.
◀

Fig. 5
Simple Orthodox cross marker made from twigs, small stones and an artificial flower at St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox cemetery, Szypenitz. The fence post and wires in the background indicate that the grave is on the outskirts of consecrated ground.
▼



This brief investigation into some aspects of Ukrainian-Canadian grave markers in east-central Alberta indicates that Ukrainian cemeteries are important sources of information for researchers of material culture as well as of local history. It is hoped that the recent designation of St. Mary's churchyard, including its cemetery, as a provincial historic site will encourage further studies.[12]

Notes

1. The Alberta Genealogical Society has researched a number of cemeteries within the area; however, no publications of Ukrainian-Canadian cemeteries have yet been produced.
2. The action is filmed around Desjarlais (near Willingdon, Alberta) as the annual celebration for the dead on the Sunday following Easter is held and the cemetery becomes "alive with motion, sound and colour" (*Luchak's Easter*, filmed 1–8 May 1973 and produced by the Visual Anthropology Unit, Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, National Museum of Man, now Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1975).
3. Traditionally, Ukrainian settlers in Canada belonged chiefly either to the Greek Catholic (also termed Uniate and presently Ukrainian Catholic) or the Greek Orthodox religious communities. The former arrived mainly from Galicia and the latter from Bukovyna. This religious division reaches back to 1596, when part of the community decided to accept the pope as head of the Christian Church. The Ukrainian (Greek) Orthodox Church under Imperial Russian (and later Soviet) jurisdiction was amalgamated into the Russian Orthodox Church in the eighteenth century.
4. A perusal of the local history publication *Pride in Progress* (Chipman: Alberta Rose Historical Society, 1982) might leave the impression that these denominational divisions occurred as a matter of fact (pp. 164 and 171). Other documents such as *Propamiatna knyha z nahody zolotoho iuvileiu poselennia ukrains'koho narodu v Kanadi* (The Commemorative Book on the Occasion of the Golden Anniversary of the Settlement of the Ukrainian People in Canada) (Yorkton: Redeemer's Voice, 1941), p. 295, indicate that the procedure was somewhat more rancorous.
5. Lorena Lennox, reporting in her article "Szypenitz made historical site," *St. Paul Journal*, 6 Jan. 1988, pp. B1 and B3, mentions, "The graves were initially marked off with wooden crosses but many of these were destroyed in a fire that was set by members to clear away some overgrown weeds and grass."
6. This style of cross was prevalent not only among Ukrainians in eastern Europe (see, for example, Hnat Koltsuniak, "Narodni khresty v Kolomyishchyni," in *Materiialy do ukrains'koi etnol'ogii* [Materials on Ukrainian Ethnology], vols. XIX–XX [Lviv: Naukove Tovarystvo im. Shevchenka, 1919], pp. 215–29 and tables IX–XIII and XVI), but also among Hungarians (for example Erno Kunt, *Folk Art in Hungarian Cemeteries* [Budapest: Corvina Kiado, 1983]), and among Romanians (for example at the cemetery of St. Mary's Romanian Orthodox Church of Hairy Hill, Alberta).
7. The Orthodox cross consists of one vertical and three horizontal bars (the lowest bar at an angle). It is also known as the patriarchal cross in the Muscovite Patriarchy and has been adopted by both Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox faithful as their symbol. Dr. Kyril Holden suggests a folk belief about the slanted lower bar in the Orthodox cross. According to this tradition, the slant in the bar where Christ's feet rested was due to a spasm when He was hanging.
8. Some of the developments leading to the division of disputed cemeteries as well as to individual grave sites suddenly assigned to "enemy" territory are alluded to in *Propamiatna knyha z nahody zolotoho iuvileiu*, pp.295–96.
9. Victoria Kushniruk, "Szypinetz Ukrainian Greek-Orthodox Church of St. Mary," in *Down Memory Trail: A History of Two Hills and Surrounding Area*, ed. Mike Kostek (Two Hills: Two Hills Historical Society, 1986), p. 233.
10. In the transcript of a taped interview between Radomir Bilash, Senior Research Historian, Historic Sites Services, Alberta Department of Culture, and Evelyn Lutzak at her home in Two Hills on 1 November 1986, Lutzak indicates that "people who committed suicide in the parish were interred separately from the rest of the graves, near the fence line."
11. Such a marker has been photographed at St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Cemetery at Szypenitz near Hairy Hill, Alberta, on 9 July 1988, by David J. Goa, Curator of Folk Life, Provincial Museum of Alberta, Edmonton.
12. See Lennox, "Szypenitz made historical site," p. B1.

Contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian Grave Markers in Urban Southern Ontario

Enrico Carlson-Cumbo

In contrast to the extensive analyses of older, rural graveyards, the modern tombstone and urban cemetery have largely been ignored as a source of study.[1] The presumed anonymity and banality of modern graveyard "art" may, in part, explain the paucity of studies. This lacunae is unfortunate. Today, as in the past, the ceremony and art accorded the deceased have as much to say about the living as the dead. Indeed, the choice of material, the symbols selected, the placing and cost of the memorial, and the associated rituals and traditions of remembrance are tied inextricably to the status and identity of the family and community of the deceased.

This preliminary study examines contemporary Ukrainain-Canadian grave markers. The study is based on fieldwork conducted in four urban cemeteries in the Toronto-Hamilton area, namely, Prospect and York cemeteries in Toronto and Woodlawn and Holy Sepulchre cemeteries in Hamilton. The Ukrainian-Canadian memorials in these cemeteries are examined in themselves and in relationship to the older, rural prairie gravesites predating the technological developments of the funerary and grave-making business. The symbols used and the very form of the grave markers are a unique expression of both personal and communal or ethnic identities.

The graves and grave markers of the Ukrainian-Canadian prairie settlements point consistently to the centrality of regional and religious identity. In an unpredictable world, religious rites provided indispensable succour to the peasant settlers. The tenacity with which these older religious and folk customs were retained is manifest in the organization of the church graveyard and in the selection of memorial symbols and inscriptions.[2]

As in the Old World, the location of the graveyard was not a matter taken lightly. The cemetery was holy ground, the place where the body of the deceased, the duly inducted member of the Church (Orthodox or Catholic), was placed in anticipation of the Second Coming. The cemetery grounds were blessed and sanctified and the plot itself accorded ritual blessings. Though now bereft of spirit and corruptive, the body was still *of* God, deserving not only the respect of the living but the appropriate ground in which to await final ressurection.

The cemetery itself was not a barren place. Ukrainian settlers believed in the persistence of the spirit, unsettled and hovering in the liminal time between death and final rest. However, in the joining of traditional beliefs and Christian orthodoxy, the cemetery was the sacred space, appropriately consecrated, where the dead huddled together, ideally near the church. By virtue of its proximity to the church, its sanctification as holy ground and the Orthodox/Catholic theology of the interrelationship of the living and the dead, the cemetery was a place of prayer and of congregation.[3]

The iron, wooden and cement crosses marking the burial plots stand as the physical emblems of sacred space. The cross itself, pointing to the grave as the locus of Christian burial, served as a personal identity marker of the deceased. To a certain extent it also served as an expository object of communal belief and identity. Painted or engraved on the cross were a variety of symbols and images expressive of religious belief, folk custom and regional derivation. Among the symbols are five- and six-pointed stars or star-like floral designs encased in a circle; three-barred crosses with the crescent moon at their base; a miniature box church at the foot of a cross; the *IC* and *XC* symbolic inscriptions; the Communion Cup; and various Passion symbols (the objects of torture appended to the cross).[4] These images are not merely decorations but pietistic expressions in which the represented is realized in the depiction,[5] or at least points to its realization for the deceased (the attainment of celestial paradise; the joyful consequences of membership in the Church; the victory of the cross over death and other enemies). Along with the religious symbols are the symbols and markings of regional identity—coloured glass or pebbles on Bukovynian burial mounds; a Muslim crescent for those whose folk legacy included Christian victory over Islam. Beyond the religious and regional identity of the deceased, the crosses convey only the barest of information—the name of the deceased, birth date, death date and village of origin. From a religious purview more than this was not required. Individuality is subsumed in a greater communal identity, both earthly—as a member of a village—and heavenly—in the confirmation of resurrection and eternal life.

Though the modern burial plot has certain obvious elements in common with these older gravesites, there are major differences in the conception and use of space and in the meaning of symbols.

In Catholic and Orthodox ritual, the cemetery is still regarded as a sacred space. A brochure for St. Michael's cemetery explains:

> The Catholic cemetery is a holy place. It is blessed by the Church and dedicated to God as a place for worship, prayer and reflection upon divine Truth and the purpose of life. It is the resting place until the day of resurrection for the bodies of the faithful departed, once temples of the Holy Spirit, whose souls are now with God. It is a final and continuing profession of faith in God and of membership in the church by those...buried with fellow believers of the household of the faithful.[6]

In the non-sectarian cemeteries, the Catholic or Orthodox plot itself—as distinct from the cemetery as a whole—is regarded as sacred space (upon performance of the appropriate ritual). The Ukrainian celebration of Green Sunday and other cemetery-based ceremonials are premised, in part, on these theological foundations, especially on the interrelationship of the living and the dead—more to the point, on the incorporation of the living and dead into the transcendent Body of Christ.[7] On a more popular level, the celebration of Green Sunday may have less to do with theological complexities than with the remnant celebration of seasonal cycles of rebirth, the popular legacy of post-death needs (the presentation of food and drink for the deceased) and tradition.

Though these ceremonies are still performed in urban Ontario, their location (however sacred) is very different from the older gravesite. As the internment literature from Hamilton and Toronto points out, their cemeteries are operated not only as places of internment and reflection, but also as "gardens of beauty and interest for the living."[8] The trustees of the Toronto General Burying Grounds, for instance, pride themselves on the acquisition "over a period of many years [of] an extensive collection of rare and unusual trees, shrubs, evergreens and herbaceous plants...which combine with the native species to form botanical gardens which probably comprise the broadest range of such plants to be found in the Toronto area."[9]

Because of these aesthetic considerations, as well as health and safety reasons, the rules and regulations of these cemeteries are explicit in barring materials and funerary addenda present in older gravesites: "Mounds will not be permitted over graves";[10] "No tablet or monument or other structure composed in whole or in part of wood or iron is permitted";[11] "All headstones shall be made of granite, marble or other durable material and no artificial stones will be permitted";[12] "Borders, fences, railings, walls, cut-stone copings and hedges in or around lots become unsightly and are prohibited";[13] "Wooden or wire trellises will not be allowed in cemeteries and any stand, holder, vase or other receptacle for flowers or plants that may be deemed unsuitable or unsightly may be removed."[14] The overall purpose of these rules and regulations is to maintain "the dignity and decorum" of the lawn cemetery.[15]

Within the constriction of these rules, the modern Ukrainian burial plot is little different from any other ethnic or native plot—except for the variety and range of symbols and images impressed on the memorial. Three types of symbols and images can be distinguished: the universal; the specifically Ukrainian; and the idiosyncratic mix of the two.

The universal designs comprise the commonplace symbols and images that no longer have a specific ethnic or distinctive character, but have become the collective property of Western funerary art. Among the more prevalent of these designs are the multitude of floral images—roses, chrysanthemums, lilies—and the ubiquitous "open book." While the open book may have once been a rendering of the Bible within the specific domain of Protestant Anglo-Saxon communities, the image today serves as the "document" upon which the name, birth date and death date of the deceased are recorded; the image has come to mean simply the "book of life."[16] With the technological advances in memorial craftsmanship (allowing for clear and detailed imaging), newer forms of universal images have made their appearance on memorials. Among the more interesting of these are the religious icons of popular piety. Renditions of DaVinci's "Last Supper," Michelangelo's "Pieta," the Good Shepherd and the praying Christ at Gethsemene have become commonplace. Among Catholics, the image of the Sacred Heart is especially popular. Though these images are not strictly "universal," they seem to transcend all cultural lines among the Christian faithful; their mass appeal may be due partly to their pathos and their mass depiction—especially the Last Supper and the Pieta—on everything from wall hangings to dishware.

However commonplace these symbols and images may be, it would be a mistake to assume they are merely decorative or perfunctory. Nicholas Neu, a Hamilton memorial craftsman, pointed out that the selection of images and inscriptions is not lightly made. A newly widowed woman, for example, had requested that he inscribe something completely different from the "usual" on her husband's memorial. After rejecting a number of common epitaphs, she finally settled on "In Loving Memory." She felt that the epitaph reflected her sentiments perfectly. And so, unknown to an observer of her husband's memorial, the simple epitaph inscribed has a personal meaning belying its ostensible commonness.[17]

Of the specifically Ukrainian symbols and images, only a few of the older designs are found in southern Ontario. I have yet to locate any crosses with the crescent moon appended or any of the star-like designs that appear to be legion in the older prairie cemeteries. Their absence in the cemeteries of southern Ontario may have less to do with regional differences than with the diminished relevance of the symbols (the Muslim association of the crescent has been replaced in recent times, no doubt, by the spectre of contemporary political enemies).

Among the more prominent of Ukrainian symbols and images in the cemeteries of southern Ontario are the trident; the Orthodox triple-barred cross; various configurations of wheat sheaves, *kalyna* berries (cranberries) and a panoply of embroidery designs; the Madonna of Perpetual Help and other icons of the Virgin; as well as Cyrillic inscriptions—not simply as conveyors of information but as distinctive, linguistic marks of identity and "filial" duty.[18]

The trident—the symbol of Ukrainian nationalism—is depicted in a variety of shapes and associations: alone; capped with the cross (most commonly) as an expression of both national and Christian identity; appended with swords and the cross commemorating the burial of a Ukrainian veteran; enlaced around the fleur-de-lis of the Ukrainian Boy Scouts movement. The importance of the trident is immediately evident. Not only is it displayed prominently in the centre or on opposing sides of many memorials; it is also emblazoned in gold as a particular mark of national identity.

The Orthodox triple-barred cross has in recent years become more than the historic property of the Orthodox Church. A very Latinate Christ in a Prospect cemetery memorial is depicted hanging from a large Orthodox cross. The general "Ukrainianization" of the Orthodox cross is not restricted solely to cemeteries. Apparently, as Reverend Roman Danylak of Toronto (Catholic Ukrainian) has noted, Catholic and Orthodox Ukrainian-Canadians alike have begun wearing triple-barred crosses not only as expressions of faith but as visible emblems of their ethnic identity.[19]

Though not exclusively Ukrainian, the wheat sheaf and certain floral design (the *kalyna* berries and the lily in particular) are fairly common symbols on Ukrainian memorials. In religious symbolism, flowers have traditionally indicated "the beauties and pleasure of paradise"; the lily has been emblematic of "special purity"; and wheat, of resurrection.[20] On the more popular level, the wheat

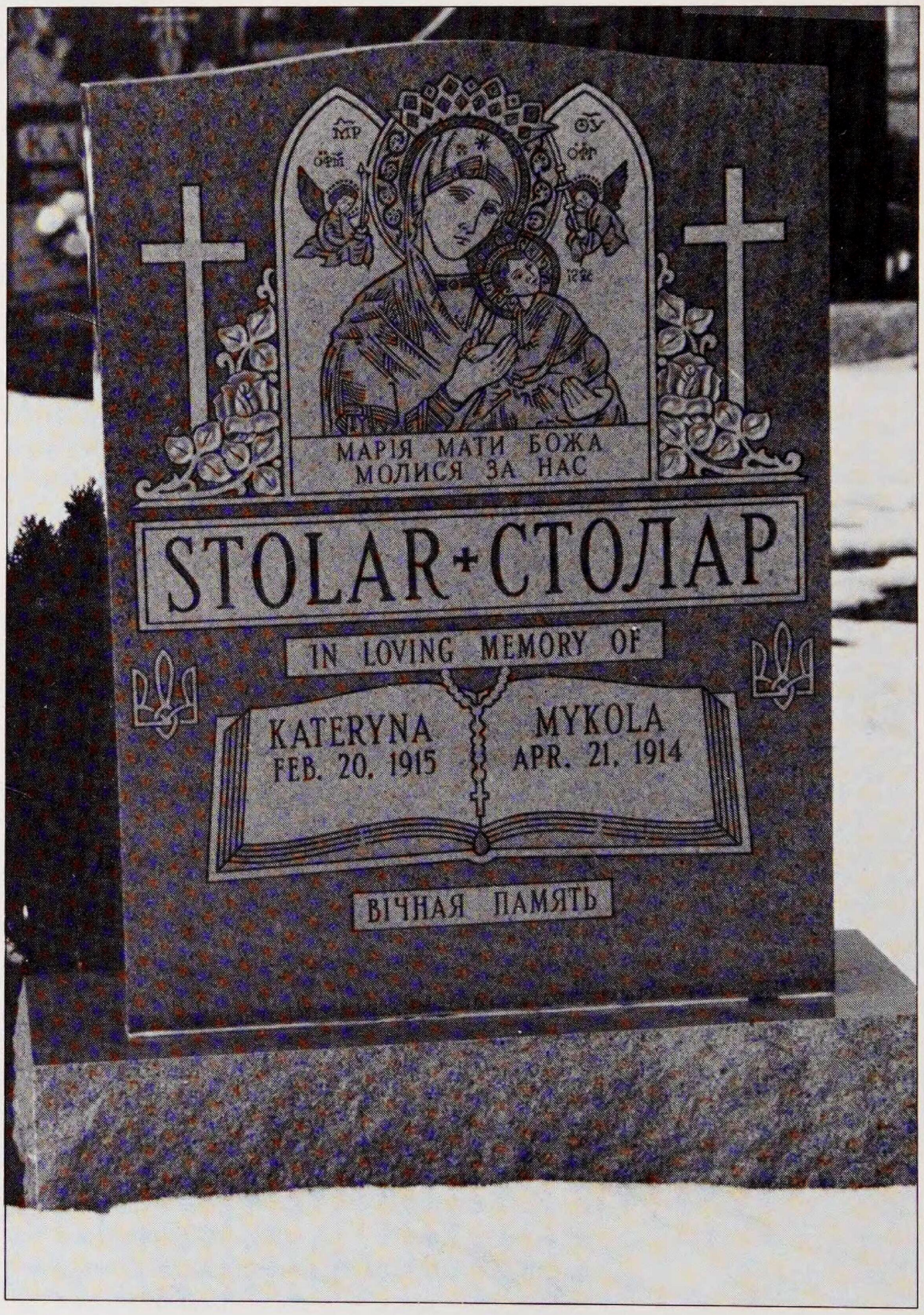


Fig. 1
Grave marker, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Hamilton (Photograph by the author)

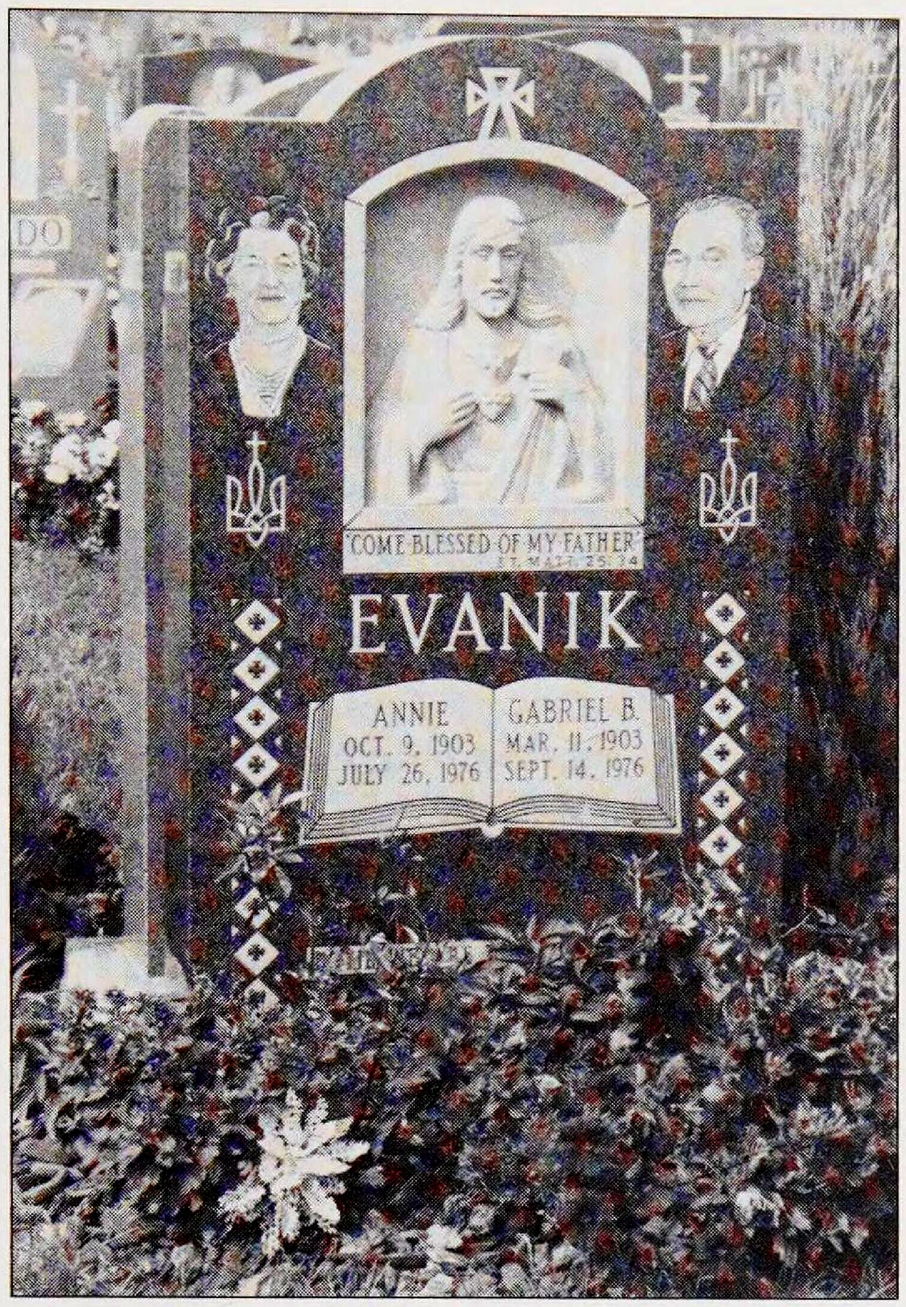


Fig. 2
Grave marker, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Hamilton (Photograph by the author)
▶

sheaf has come also to represent the Ukrainian nation in its association with the earth and the golden harvest emblazoned on the Ukrainian flag.[21]

The ubiquitious embroidered patterns on Ukrainian memorials—though varying in design—are only ostensibly different from each other. While a very few individuals select embroidery patterns for their specific regional or historical relevance, many Ukrainians, as Roman Demkiw, a Toronto memorial retailer points out, choose their designs on purely aesthetic grounds from the list of "Ukrainian" patterns available. The importance of the memorial embroideries is not only aesthetic but avowedly ethnic. The aesthetic import is in the decorative appeal of the design, and the ethnic import in the enduring statement being made of "Ukrainianness."[22]

The Byzantine Madonna of Perpetual Help is an especially prominent image on memorials at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Hamilton. This and other icons of the Virgin dot the various cemeteries under discussion. The Madonna of Perpetual Help, though originally a Western Catholic image, has become a central funerary icon of Ukrainian Catholics. Its prevalence may be explained, in part, by the influence of the Madonna as intercessor and by the powerful symbols associated with the image (depicted in Byzantine style).[23] Surrounding the icon of the Virgin and Child are Cyrillic inscriptions for Maria Regina, Queen of Heaven, Archangel Michael, Archangel Gabriel and Jesus Christ (quite a panoply of protectors). The presence of the image in holy cards, distributed at funeral parlours and churches, is an important component of its popularity.[24] The recurrence of the icon in the cemetery itself has spurred others to follow suit in their selection of funerary images.[25]

While all these symbols and images can be found separately, they are more commonly mixed in idiosyncratic arrangements (depending on cost and the memorial space available). Universal symbols—most commonly, the book of life (or scrolls) and floral designs—are mixed with Ukrainian or Ukrainianized elements—the trident most prominently along with wheat sheaves and embroidery designs. The juxtaposition of and addenda to these elements point to an extraordinary variety of personal expressions on the part of modern Ukrainian Canadians unknown or simply unimportant in the past. Circles and hearts are intertwined with tridents and crosses; sun rays rush from one end of the memorial to the other; the Last Supper is bordered with "Ukrainian" embroidery; photographs or engravings of the deceased are placed in juxtaposition to icons. What is one to read in all of this?

In contrast to the older markers, the variety of funerary expression has allowed modern Ukrainians to choose, far more than ever before, what they wish remembered about themselves personally and communally. Grave markers contain a relative profusion of personal information, not only name, birth date and death date, but also photographs (in porcelain medallions), engravings, associational memberships, military record and so forth. The choice of expensive black stone (difficult to obtain in Ukraine) is further evidence of the importance of status and keeping up with the expectations of the burial norms of a community, of doing "the right thing."[26] The memoria is not simply the physical placemark of burial but a public statement of individual identity and achievement. Of course, such a statement is by no means an exclusively Ukrainian trait. In the modern world, this orientation is due to the interplay of conspicuous consumption, the dread of death and the obsession, accordingly, with the perpetuation of a *known* image (notwithstanding the ostensibly transcendent religious symbolism on memorials).

Besides the emphasis on individuality, the memorials point to a communal identity that,

unlike the older memorials, is less subregionally specific than assertively and homogeneously "Ukrainian." The general Ukrainian embroidery, the Byzantine icons, the trident and the wheat sheaf assert the commonality of all the Ukrainians buried in any given cemetery. The recent foundation of the St. Vladimir Cemetery near Oakville, Ontario, has brought this sense of nationalism to the fore; in recent years, Catholics and Orthodox alike have been exhumed from various cemetery sites throughout the region and reburied at St. Vladimir's. For a people whose homeland is occupied, the emphasis on a generalized communal sensibility transcending Old World regional and religious lines is understandable. The irony is that the greater the effort to assert and portray general Ukrainianness, the more homogeneous that identity becomes; the more self-conscious the statement of nationalism—a statement expressed in a set range of symbols—the more sanitized and created it becomes. This is not to say that the contemporary sense of national identity is any less authentic or vital than subregional identification in the past. In fact, quite the contrary. The memorial is an important and final statement of identity; the seeming homogeneity of Ukrainianness is simply an expression of contemporary reality.

Notes

1. Of the few such studies, see Elizabeth Matthias, "The Italian-American Funeral: Persistence Through Change," *Western Folklore*, 33 no. 1 (1974): 35–50; David Chuenyan Lai, "The Chinese Cemetery in Victoria," *BC Studies*, 75: (Autumn 1987): 24–42.
2. Harry Piniuta, *Land of Pain, Land of Promise* (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1978), pp. 77ff., 94. See also "Miss M'Clains's" account of a "Russian Funeral" in *Missionary Outlook*, (September 1908): 210.
3. For the theology of burial, see D.E.W., comp., *Euchologian (Trebnyk): A Byzantine Ritual* (Hamtramck: n.p., 1978), pp. 58–59, 60–61, 82–86, 251–56. See also John D. Weisengoff, *The Small Trebnyk*, trans. Joseph Shary (Detroit, Mich.: St. Joseph's Institute, 1983), pp. 120–24, 132–33, 166–69.
4. These images are common in the various Ukrainian graveyards in east and south-central Saskatchewan.
5. In the ancient belief that what is depicted is in fact realized, these images are not only representations of Christian victory but, quite possibly, the affirmation of victory as well.
6. Toronto Catholic Cemeteries Association, *A Quiet Gentle Surprise*, (Toronto: Mission Press, 1980), p. 49.
7. D.E.W., *Euchologian*, pp. 75–77.
8. *Toronto Trust Cemeteries* (pamphlet) (Toronto: Trustees of the Toronto General Burying Grounds, 1986), p. 7.
9. Ibid., p. 7.
10. Toronto Trust Cemeteries, *Rules and Regulations* (Toronto: Trustees of the Toronto General Burying Grounds, 1986), p. 13; hereinafter cited as TTC. Hamilton Municipal Cemeteries, *Rules and Regulations of the Cemeteries* (Hamilton: HMC, 1986), p. 10; hereinafter cited as HMC.
11. TTC, pp. 15–17; HMC, p. 14.
12. HMC, p. 14; TTC, p. 19. (In the Toronto cemeteries, "marble may be used only for the interiors of mausoleums and vaults on surfaces which are not exposed to the weather.")
13. TTC, p. 10; HMC, pp. 7-8.
14. TTC, p. 10; HMC, p. 6.
15. TTC, p. 15.
16. Interviews with Nicholas Neu (memorial craftsman), 29 August 1987; Roman Demkiw (memorial retailer), 20 July 1988; Heinz Mueller (memorial craftsman), 25 November 1988.
17. Interview with Neu. The personal meaning of a symbol or graphic was also illustrated by Heinz Mueller. He was asked by a client to prepare a monument consisting of a cross with a strangely scalloped base. This peculiar design was intended to replicate the shape of a favorite spoon of the recently deceased!
18. Interview with Neu.
19. Interview with Reverend Roman Danylak, 19 July 1988.
20. Rev. F. Kernisky, *Terms and Symbols of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church* (pamphlet) (Windsor: St. Vladimir Ukrainian Greek Orthodox School, 1960), p. 24.
21. Interviews with Neu; Demkiw; Mueller; and James Cardinal (funeral director, Cardinal Funeral Home), 19 July 1988.
22. Interviews with Demkiw and Mueller.
23. D.E.W., *Euchologian*, p. 59 and passim; Weisgoff, *Small Trebnyk*, p. 32 and passim.
24. Interview with Cardinal.
25. Interview with Neu.
26. Interviews with Demkiw and Mueller.

A Ukrainian Church Exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Civilization

Brad Loewen

The completed History Hall of the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) will contain a reproduction of a circa 1930–35 prairie Ukrainian church. The History Hall is a vaulted space measuring 110 metres by 30 metres, with a maximum height of about 18 metres. The exhibits will be spatially organized, roughly, into three rows of eleven exhibits each, through which the visitor will meander in chronological sequence, ending in the late twentieth century. Many exhibits are "framed" by symbolic structures—like the prairie Ukrainian church—which are themselves artifacts of Canada's historical landscape and evoke associations of time, place and culture.

Research for the church exhibit has focused on four areas of material culture: the architecture of the church, the interior painting, the artifacts produced by Ukrainian craftworkers and the artifacts deriving from commercial sources. Other research is directed at themes to be interpreted through sound, live performances and publications. This report will discuss some findings related to the work of carpenters and painter-craftsmen.

The Museological Context

The director of the CMC, Dr. George MacDonald, has repeatedly stated his conception of the Museum's new public face in a series of addresses and articles.[1] The idea of "cultural tourism" figures prominently, that is, offering a cultural message in an entertaining fashion. Among other interpretive methods, one is to allow the visitor to experience another culture by creating a historic environment, complete with inhabitants. This approach affects the roles of museum historians and curators, who must ensure the historical and contextual veracity of a greatly expanded repertoire of exhibit media, and requires a standard beyond the financial reach of most institutions.

The CMC's pan-Canadian exhibit mandate includes themes and artifacts that have been the preserve of specialized museums, museums that reflect a regional or local, often "ethnic," desire to maintain and present a heritage. For example, until recently, the bearers of the Ukrainian heritage have been intimate members of the community, but that heritage has now become a component in the larger exercise of Canadian myth-making. This trend is related to other aspects of Canadian cultural policy such as education and multiculturalism.

The drawing together of diverse historical experiences in a uniform style to foster cultural tourism is disquieting for those who wish to hold on to, in Ernst Nolte's phrase, the "familiar and beloved." Yet the challenge thus raised is timely, and articulates the paradoxical context in which museum historians and curators, conditioned as somewhat selective heritage guardians, find themselves. Their annual audience at the CMC is forecast at two million, representing a touristic, expansionist culture that winnows and appropriates the accumulated knowledge of other cultures, both past and present. The taste of these visitors, as much as the historical material, defines the work of the museum exhibit planner.

Recent Investigation

Systematic research into the material culture of Ukrainian churches remains active in the Prairie provinces. In general, the work began with salvage operations by members of the Ukrainian community in response to the abandonment of rural churches after 1960. Inventories and photographs have since been taken of existing buildings, and surviving members of congregations have been interviewed. These inventories form the basis for systematic study of Ukrainian church material culture.

The Church Historical Information Retrieval Project (CHIRP) was researched for the Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies between 1971 and 1975 and compiled as research files by 1978. The files, now at the CMC in Ottawa, contain information on 146 Saskatchewan churches of East European congregations (sixty-nine of which are Ukrainian Catholic). Each file contains a photo essay (exterior, interior, grounds, informants), a building questionnaire, a congregation history based on interviews, and line drawings of building plans and iconostasis elevations.

Anna Baran's *Ukrainian Catholic Churches of Saskatchewan* contains information similar

to that of CHIRP on some 166 Ukrainian Catholic parishes in Saskatchewan.[2] Occasionally the two sources contradict on the dates of details by a year or two. The omissions that arise from the questionnaire method are evident in comparing the two Saskatchewan sources. The two sources do not cover all the East European churches in the province, the most important gap being in the Ukrainian Orthodox group. Despite these limitations, the public information on Saskatchewan churches remains the most complete of any province, as reflected in the dominance of Saskatchewan material in the following discussion.

In the course of developing the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village near Edmonton, the Alberta Department of Culture has prepared several detailed reports of church material culture in the 1927 to 1935 period. As case histories of land use, structures, artifacts and congregations, these reports are comprehensive. Moreover, the three churches that were the objects of analysis have all been moved to the museum site and restored. A subsequent photographic inventory of Alberta churches has assembled the systematic information needed for further research projects.

Two researchers with the Alberta Department of Culture have broken ground in the systematic analysis of church material culture. Diana Thomas Kordan's article "Tradition in a New World: Ukrainian Catholic Churches in Alberta" presents her analysis of formal aspects of Ukrainian church architecture and the historical influences these forms represent.[3] Radomir Bilash has published a study of the Alberta painter-craftsman Peter Lipinski,[4] who was active from about 1912 to about 1972 as a church and icon painter. Lipinski was an early popularizer of church painting in Canada and, as a painter-crafts man, was possibly the most prodigious, having worked in at least fifty churches.[5]

Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation began its study of Ukrainian churches in 1978 with an inventory of East European churches.[6] Since then, the work of recording church information has been taken up by the Manitoba East European Heritage Society (MEEHS) based at St. Andrew's College in Winnipeg. By the late summer of 1988, MEEHS had compiled research files on some fifty congregations and churches, with work in progress on a hundred more, emphasizing the photography of material culture. MEEHS researchers are preparing a publication illustrating the continuity in Manitoba of architectural forms from Ukraine.[7]

Early Trends in Church-Building Activities

Construction of Ukrainian churches in Saskatchewan continued at a fairly steady pace from about 1900 to the 1950s (table 1). In Catholic parishes, about a third (80) of the construction (246) from 1902 to 1977 was for replacement churches. Construction of first churches was concentrated in 1902 to 1929 and 1940 to 1959. Replacement construction was steady from 1920 to 1959.

The construction of a church was the biggest communal project that most congregations were to organize; therefore, social organization of such construction is worth noting. The earliestchurches were community-built with hewn logs, perhaps under the informal supervision of several men. The community's memory of traditions in Ukraine provided the only architectural guide.

By the mid-1910s, a strong trend began toward the hiring of a carpenter-craftsman, whose local reputation as a general building contractor might grow into a regional reputation as a church builder. These carpenter-craftsmen changed the architecture of Ukrainian church-building, not only in the techniques and social organization, but also in formal aspects. They adapted North American construction materials, especially pre-cut lumber, and techniques such as "balloon" framing. In the organization of their work, they were the paid foremen of crews of volunteers from the congregation. They also changed the form of prairie churches. While adhering to a sense of the Ukrainian in their architectural form, they preferred to emulate urban and even metropolitan forms such as the Kievan or Byzantine, rather than to perpetuate the regional "folk" forms of the first churches.

In Saskatchewan, some prominent carpenter-craftsmen were Wasyl Huziak and the Semeniuk brothers of Arran, Fedor (Fred) Vistovsky, O.M. [?] Slonetsky, Harry Sulyma, the Manitoban Ivan Ticholyz and the Edmontonian Josef Janishewsky (see table 2).

These builders, as well as several less busy carpenter-craftsmen, worked within a remarkably uniform style. They built domed, cruciform churches with polygonal apses and gabled roofs. Except for earlier churches, they usually added two frontal towers, a feature introduced by Roman Catholic missionaries

in Alberta.[8] Most of their churches were replacements for outgrown or destroyed pioneer buildings. As a group, these builders are significant for creating in Canada a style of architecture which harkened to Ukrainian metropolitan forms, even as the traditional forms built by the first colonizers fell from favour and disappeared.

Another gradual trend was the emergence of builders who were self-conscious religious architects. In Saskatchewan, the first was Professor Pawlychenko of Saskatoon who built St. Mary's Ukrainian Orthodox Church at Melville in 1924 and Holy Trinity Orthodox Church at Canora in 1928.[9] Another was Philip Ruh, whose reputation spanned the country and who had a busy career as a religious architect from 1916 to 1960.[10]

A third trend emerged in Saskatchewan around 1940, as builders with little stylistic remembrance of the Old World began to add design features which can best be described as modern. A telltale feature of one builder of the 1940s and 1950s, Nicholas Zary, was his use of bold curves in the facade detail of the gables.[11] Other Saskatchewan builders who took up New World forms were Illya (Ilko) and Alex Sembelarous (Cymbalarous) of Prud'homme, Theodore Buchko of Ituna and Hryhoriw (Harry) Shalley of Goodeve.[12]

Table 1: Church Building in Saskatchewan Ukrainian-Catholic Parishes

Decade Ending	Initial Church in Parish	Replacement Churches	Total Construction	Total Church Stock
1909	34	2	36	34
1919	42	9	51	76
1929	14	14	28	90
1939	15	16	31	105
1949	31	14	45	146
1959	25	16	41	161
1969	2	8	10	163
1977	3	1	4	166

Source: Baran, *Ukrainian Churches.*

The work of these builders was organized like that of the earlier carpenter-craftsmen. They also held a similarly prestigious social place in the region, as is suggested in the renovation of a church at Humboldt in 1973. The congregation wished to add an entrance and a facade to their rectangular gable-roofed church, and engaged the elderly Nick Zary and Illya Sembelarous from nearby Prud'homme to build in their distinctive style.[13] In the stylistic licence of these builders, and in the cognitive architecture of Pawlychenko and Ruh, one finds the formal and social precursors of modern church architects.

During the period of renewed parish founding in the 1940s and 1950s (see table 1), the practice of communal church building was revived. Descriptions of such construction are reminiscent of the early settlement period, except that the term "volunteers" is inserted to describe the later builders. The architecture emulated metropolitan Ukrainian forms, comparable to that of the carpenter-craftsmen of the 1920s and 1930's, but the execution of those forms was less accomplished. The churches were built as cheaply as possible, without iconostases or commissioned iconic painting, and were often sheathed with asphalt fake brick. Thus, the experience of the parish pioneers of the post-war decade in Saskatchewan echoes the early settlement years.

In summary, the material from Saskatchewan bears out several historical trends in Ukrainian church building. The first is the abandonment of regional folk styles as practised by the early settlers. Equally important is the spread of metropolitan Ukrainian forms of architecture, as emulated in wood by the carpenter-craftsmen, particularly during the 1920 to 1939 period. The third is in the organization of construction around a general building contractor who specialized in church building, and preferred the use of pre-cut materials that reinforced a regular architectural style. The fourth is the emergence of more individual architectural practices and forms, influenced by modernist and western European conventions.

Early Church Painting in Saskatchewan

The same research material reveals a parallel, and in some ways complementary, history of the people who painted the interiors of these Prairie churches. Along with Lipinski in Alberta, the two Winnipeg-based painter-craftsmen Jacob Maydanyk and Hnat Sych are

Table 2: Prominent Builders of Cruciform, Open-Domed Churches in Saskatchewan, 1909–1947 (Catholic Parishes)

Builder	Place	Date Built
Semeniuk brothers	Wroxton	1909
	St. Philips	1917
	Arran*	1925
Wasyl Huziak	Arran*	1925
	Meath Park	1931
	Hryhoriw	1932
	Kovalivka	1933
	Stenen	1934
	Norquay Farms	1935
	Whitesand	1937
	Swan Plain	1938
	Melville	1939
	Kamsack	1947
Ivan Ticholyz	Meath Park	1917
	Dnieper	1931
	Model Farm	1933
	Palin View	1934
Joseph Janishewsky	Hafford	1917
	Cudworth Farms	1934
	Bodnari	1936
	Gronlid	1944
	Krydor	1947
Fedor Vistovsky	Kyziv-Tiaziv	1928
	Rama	1936
	Hazel Dell	1944
Harry Sulyma	Fenwood	1937
	Goodeve	1940
O.M. Slonetsky	Alvena Farm	1923
	Rosthern	1927
	Smuts	1935

*Wasyl Huziak and the Semeniuk brothers worked together on the church of their home parish at Arran.

Source: Baran, *Ukrainian Churches.*

well known.[14] Saskatchewan has supported several painter-craftsmen, one of the most significant being Paul Zabalotny.

An important part of Ukrainian material culture is the aesthetic decoration of objects found in everyday life. Women were embroiderers, egg painters, floral arrangers and food sculptors; men were woodcarvers, carpenters and painters; both had a sense for patterns, especially with geometric and floral motifs. As an ongoing communal project, the church was decorated with the same attention to detail as were domestic objects. In church decoration, a unifying aesthetic was found in religious icons that had patterns of placement and subject, but allowed for the artist's individual style. Decoration of prairie Ukrainian churches was not a formal obligation, but rather a combination of aesthetic sense and social etiquette.

The development of church painting and the prominence of a few painter-craftsmen parallel in time and social significance the rise of carpenter-craftsmen as builders of churches. The respective precursors nonetheless seem different in structure, for the carpenter-craftsmen were preceded by folk builders, and the painter-craftsmen by commercially produced icons from western Europe. It seems that a confluence of European and Canadian historical trends in the decades around the turn of the century produced Ukrainian church painting on a hitherto unseen scale. There was increasing unity of Ukrainian cultural articulation in Europe, and the colonizing Ukrainians of the Canadian Prairies were soon enveloped by this metropolitan trend. Also, the relative affluence of Ukrainians in Canada allowed them to acquire the forms emanating from the cultural centres of Ukraine.

The parallel rise of carpenters and painter-craftsmen was in many ways harmonious. Both eschewed restrictive regionalism that might have made their forms incompatible to one another. A synthesis arose of carpenters who left a standard assemblage of interior surfaces, and painters who learned standards of treating those same architectural spaces. Their common inspiration tended to be the traditional Kievan style, as best as they could recall and apply it.

Painters in Canada took their work seriously, striving for a standard arrangement of iconic subjects. Their efforts were mitigated by the wishes of parishioners, who requested certain subjects, or favoured a painter on such criteria as a preference for one painter's stencil patterns.[15] Painters could not generally make a

living decorating churches, and would find work as house painters among the congregations which hired them.

There were complex undercurrents in the relationship between the painter and the parishioner. In an era when itinerants were viewed with a trace of condescension and indulgence by sedentary parishioners, some painters cultivated a puckish persona.[16] Although their advice was sought on subject matter and their decorative skills were in demand, painter-craftsmen held a separate place in the community's social order. The painter was perhaps more sophisticated than the parishioner in his cultural expression, but the parishioner was in a position to employ the painter. A congregation's status was affirmed not only by its acquisition of metropolitan decorative forms, but also by its ability to hire a reputable craftsman to do the job. A painter's reputation in inter-war prairie Ukrainian society did not rest entirely on his ability as an artist. Contemporary informants remember whether a painter worked alone, or was businesslike enough to hire a crew in the manner of a general building contractor. Jacob Maydanyk, for example, is remembered not only as a painter, but also as a shrewed entrepreneur.

The painter and carpenter-craftsman offered similar expertise and fulfilled similar social roles. Although both craftsmen worked within Ukrainian styles, each contributed to the demise of regional folk styles by their knowledge of and control over desirable metropolitan styles. Their ability to establish widely known personal reputations in an esteemed specialist occupation devalued the broadly practised folk arts, which harboured regional traditions.

These craftsmen and the social significance of their work have stood between subsequent observers and the study of preceding folk traditions of architecture. Of the seventy-six generally folk-built churches raised between 1902 and 1919 in Saskatchewan Catholic parishes, no fewer than fifty-five were destroyed and replaced by carpenter-craftsmen by 1959 (table 1). The function of these craftsmen in popularizing a unified Ukrainian culture has deflected interest from the diversity of regional styles which the pioneers brought with them. Occasionally, however, the carpenter-craftsmen failed in their attempts to combine a personal touch with appropriate references to Kievan modes, producing work that can only be described as eclectic. An example is the well-known church at Dobrowody, Saskatchewan, an architectural uncertainty that was transformed into a national treasure by the brushes of Paul Zabalotny.

Table 3 shows the period during which church painting became popular and the rate at which painted churches became the general experience of Ukrainian worshippers. In 1929, only one in twenty-two congregations had hired a painter-craftsman, while, a generation later, one church in three displayed formal painting. More than a dozen church painters are recorded in Saskatchewan, but only two achieved prominence as painter-craftsmen in the manner of Peter Lipinski, Hnat Sych and Jacob Maydanyk. Stephan Meush, whose craft extended to woodworking, decorated the interiors of at least eleven churches from 1933 to about 1942 (table 4). Paul Zabalotny, who was active from 1930 to about 1955, painted at least twenty churches (table 5). Church painting was continued by Theodore Baran of Saskatoon, who worked on at least thirty-seven churches from 1950 to 1976, painting in the "true Byzantine tradition."[17]

The painting of Paul Zabalotny, over about twenty-five years, shows a gradual progression away from a folk aesthetic sense. Certain aspects of his work remain continuous, such as his standard placement of icons on the iconostasis and walls, and his preference for a central icon inside the dome. At Dobrowody (1936) he painted a few stylized logos (including angels and the Ukrainian trident) that were neither icon nor linear stencil, which became a prominent feature of his later work at Goodeve (n.d., built 1940), Alvena (1945) and Kuroki (n.d., built 1952).

The clearest evidence that Zabalotny was influenced by formal metropolitan styles is in his rendering of linear border stencils and the stencil-like patterns with which he framed his icons. His early stencils are similar to traditional geometric Ukrainian embroidery patterns, and are seen at Canora (1930), Dobrowody, Rama (n.d., built 1937), Goodeve and Kuroki. This aesthetic style is overridden by the appearance of bold, tendril-like abstract patterns with which he framed his wall and pendentive icons and which are similar in style to his symbolic logos. An early inclination toward this style is found in the floral designs around the pendentive icons at Rama and occurs regularly in the frames around the wall and drum icons at Alvena, Alvena Farm parish (n.d., built 1923) and Kuroki.

Both geometric and floral motifs are common in other traditional Ukrainian

Table 3: Church Painting, Saskatchewan Catholic Parishes

Decade Ending	Churches Built	Total Parishes	Churches Painted	Total Painted Churches*	Ratio of Total Parishes: Total Painted
1909	36	34	0	0	34.0:0
1919	51	76	0	0	76.0:0
1929	28	90	4	4	22.5:1
1939	31	105	13	17	6.0:1
1949	45	136	10	17	5.0:1
1959	41	161	26	53	3.0:1
1969	10	163	15	68	2.4:1
1977	4	166	8	76	2.2:1

*Some painted churches may have been destroyed.

Source: Baran, *Ukrainian Churches*.

Table 4: Saskatchewan Churches Decorated by Stephan Meush

Year Decorated	Place	Church	Date Built
1933	Kovalivka	Transfiguration C	1933
1935	Smuts	St. John the Baptist CC	1926
1936	Arran	St. John the Baptist CC	1925
1938	Regina	St. Basil the Great CC (old)	1928
1938	Rama	SS. Peter & Paul CC	1936–39
1939, 1941	Yorkton	Our Lady of Perpetual Help CC	1914
1942	Havrylivky	Sacred Heart CC	1928
n.d.	Alvena Farm	Dormition of Our BVM CC	1923
n.d.	Stenen	St. Nicholas CC	1934
n.d.	Saskatoon	St. George's CC	1939–43
n.d.	Rosthern	SS. Peter & Paul CC (old)	1952(?)

Table 5: Saskatchewan Churches Painted by Paul Zabalotny

Year Painted	Place	Church	Date Built
1930	Canora	Holy Trinity OC	1928
1935–36	Dnieper	Transfiguration CC	1931
1936	Antonivka	Assumption of the BVM CC	1906
1936	Dobrowody	Nativity of the BVM CC	1912
1936, 1938	Bobulynci	Transfiguration	1931
1940	Ituna	Sacred Heart CC	1919
1942	Rosthern Farm	Descent of the HS CC	1927
1945	Alvena	St. Michael's CC	1943
1952–53	Blankend	Ascension CC	1945–53
1953	Jasmin	HA SS. Peter & Paul CC	1948–49
1954	Plain View	Descent of the HS CC	1934
1955	Jedburgh	SS. Peter & Paul CC	1948
n.d.	Stenen	Assumption of the BVM CC	1909
n.d.	Alvena Farm	Dormition of Our BVM CC	1923
n.d.	Melville	Intercession of St. Mary OC	1924
n.d.	Cudworth	Holy Eucharist CC	1928
n.d.	Rama	St. Michael's OC	1937
n.d.	Goodeve	Holy Trinity CC	1940
n.d.	Vonda	Sacred Heart CC	1942–43
n.d.	Kuroki	SS. Peter & Paul CC	1952

Sources: Baran, *Ukrainian Churches*; CHIRP.

expressive media. What is remarkable is the sense of abstraction and modern boldness which affected floral designs in the church painting craft. Paul Zabalotny's adoption of bold floral patterns in the 1940s was a stylistic link to the artist-painter Theodore Baran. In fact, the icon frames at St. George's Catholic Church at Melville, attributed to Theodore Baran,[18] are the same as those developed by Zabalotny at Alvena, Alvena Farm and Kuroki, creating a problem of identification. More important, however, is the change in aesthetic sense exhibited by Zabalotny, and the social changes reflected in his adoption of a more abstract, yet also traditional Byzantine style.

Conclusion

In Zabalotny's style of painting, in the popularity of church painting in general and in the architecture of the period, one sees a shift away from regional forms toward metropolitan Ukrainian forms of expression. A distinction is implied between the culture of the regional Ukrainian folk and that of the metropolitan Ukrainian nation. As prairie Ukrainian society modernized, it was most cognitive of metropolitan Ukrainian cultural leadership.

On the other hand, the techniques and organization of church building showed an acceptance of Canadian capitalist culture. The use of pre-cut lumber and commercial products instead of hewn timber and handcrafted features changed and reduced the work of parishioners during church building. The individualism and concentration that characterized the church carpenter and painter crafts of the 1920s are evidence of the changes in Ukrainian colonist society.

Interpretation of other aspects of church material culture gives further complexity to the experience of modernization in a migrant peasant society. The female home-based embroiderer tradition remained vital and retained many regional forms. On the other hand, the male home-based tradition of working wood to make religious objects largely disappeared. Commercially available wood products certainly reduced the need for woodworking, but the increasing capitalist consumption of manual labour also reduced general male productivity in the home and parish, the traditional loci of ethnicity.

Church architecture, a highly visible example of prairie Ukrainian culture of the 1920s and 1930s, points to the unfolding of a Ukrainian national consciousness from diverse regional heritages. At the same time, the increasing specialization of the carpenters' and painter-craftsmen's work represents a change in the meaning and division of labour for communal projects. The contrasting fates of the embroidering and woodworking aesthetic crafts illustrate the complexity of ethnicity, metropolitanism and modernity within Prairie Ukrainian society.

Notes

1. For example: *Vision Statement* (Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1987); "Epcot Centre in Museological Perspective," *Muse* (Spring, 1988); House of Commons, Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, *Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence*, no. 19, 31 May 1988; Interview with Vicki Gabereaux, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 10 October 1987.
2. Anna Baran, *Ukrainian Churches of Saskatchewan* (Saskatoon: Ukrainian Catholic Council of Saskatchewan, 1977).
3. Diana Thomas Kordan, "Tradition in the New World: Ukrainian Catholic Churches in Alberta," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* 13, no. 1 (1988).
4. Radomir R. Bilash, "Peter Lipinski: Prairie Church Artist," *Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada Bulletin* 13, no. 1 (1988).
5. Bilash (ibid.) states that Lipinski worked in two Saskatchewan churches. According to Baran (*Ukrainian Churches*), Lipinski worked in the Holy Eucharist Catholic Church (built 1917) in Hafford during 1923 to 1925 and in the St. Nicholas Catholic Church (b. 1912) in Brooksby about 1925. CHIRP researchers (Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Church Historical Information Retrieval Project, 1978) reported that Lipinski worked during 1917 at Wasylowitz in the St. Helena and Macarus Catholic Church (b. 1913) and at Alvena Farm (n.d.) in the Dormition of Our Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church (b. 1923). Thus, Lipinski's known Saskatchewan total rises to four.
6. *Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba: A Building Inventory* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Historic Resources, 1987).
7. Study and interpretation of regional Ukrainian architectural forms was greatly enhanced thanks to discussions with MEEHS researchers Roman Yereniuk and Basil Rotoff.
8. Thomas Kordan, *Tradition in the New World.* The Manitoban, Ticholyz, also conformed to this style in his later churches in Saskatchewan.
9. CHIRP, files 72–29 (59) and 75–19 (135).
10. *Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba: A Building Inventory* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Historic Resources, 1987), table I, pp. 381–83.
11. Zary built or renovated the Catholic churches at Alvena (1939), Yellow Creek (1951), Meacham (1952), Vonda (1952), Rose Valley (1958), Laniwci (1965) and Humboldt (1973).
12. Alex Sembelarous built the Catholic church at Vonda (1942), Illya Sembelarous at Prud'homme (1945) and the "Sembelarous family" (Baran, *Ukrainian Churches*) built at Wadena (1950). The Catholic church at Melfort (1950) bears the characteristic Sembelarous style: rectangular plan, with gabled roof, frontal towers and a blind dome at the front apex of the gable. Peter Sembelarous built a cruciform, domed church with frontal towers at Jasmin Farms in 1950. Theodore Buckho built churches at Kelliher (1941), Jasmin (1948) and with his sons at Willowbrook (1951). A contractor from Ituna named Wasyl Buchko and sons later built modern churches at Ituna (1963) and Foam Lake (1964). In 1926, a man named Buchko was one of the builders of a church at Honeymoon. Hryhoriw Shalley's style was less individual than that of Zary or the Sembelarous brothers. However, it may be generalized that he preferred to build a domeless (or blind-domed), cruciform church with gable roofs and frontal towers. He built the Catholic churches at Jedburgh (built 1948), Wroxton (1949), Beaver Dale (1950), Holar (1952) and Wynyard (1953).
13. Baran, *Ukrainian Churches.*
14. Bilash, "Lipinski." Peter Melnycky, *Jacob Maydanyk* (Winnipeg: 1981). Hnat (Ignatius) Sych also appears as Paul or Ivan Sych (Sich). He too worked in Saskatchewan. CHIRP researchers reported Sych's work at Norquay Farms during 1938 in the Holy Trinity Catholic Church (b. 1935) and at Swan Plain during 1942 in the Ascension Catholic Church (b. 1938). Baran corroborates these findings.
15. Personal communication, Katherine Batryn Anderson, October 1988, in the context of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church in Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, which was painted by Hnat Sych.
16. The story is told that, while painting the church in Portage la Prairie, Hnat Sych flattered a local deacon by painting his face on the body of a saint in one icon. When he had trouble getting payment for his work, Sych converted the icon's subject matter to Christ's temptation in the desert and added horns to the deacon's face. Jacob Maydanyk, a Winnipeg-based painter and church goods supplier, was the author of a cartoon series entitled "Shteef Tabachniuk" published in *Ukrainian Farmer* from 1930 to 1933, which poked fun at Ukrainian immigrant mores.
17. Baran, *Ukrainian Churches.* Compiled from Baran and CHIRP.
18. Baran, *Ukrainian Churches.*

Building the Little House on the Prairies: Ukrainian Technology, Canadian Resources

ROMAN FODCHUK

Although the Ukrainian settlers in western Canada came with little in their bags and baggage, they quickly turned their new environment to use. The forests and prairies contained abundant natural resources. Poplar, spruce, tamarack, birches, various cherries and the willow provided the basic structural materials. Prairie slough grasses and native clays supplied raw materials for the craftsman's kit. Using ingenuity to adapt Canadian materials to their own design, the settlers crafted tools, utensils and buildings uniquely expressive of Ukrainian culture.

This report looks at how the pioneers combined Canadian prairie resources with Ukrainian customs and building techniques in constructing their new homes.

Pioneer Home

The construction of a settler's permanent home was the first clear opportunity for cultural expression in the new land. The generations of experience in building, folk design and vernacular embellishment showed in the Ukrainian character of these homes,[1] despite the fact that the settlers were accustomed to a warmer homeland having an ecosystem of hardwoods, such as beeches and walnuts. The Prairies were covered with the northern boreal coniferous and deciduous woodlands. The frost-free period was only ninety days. Tall, straight poplars provided logs for the walls of most prairie dwellings. Heavier logs of spruce, brought in from a distance, were usually used as foundation pieces. Spruce was found along river valleys and larger streams. Birch, willow, wild cherries and saskatoons provided the harder woods for fashioning various tools and the spikes and pins that held the beams together. Floors were rough-sawn planks of black poplar, a resinous timber cured and hardened into a serviceable surface that withstood wear, fungus and ground rot.[2] Differences in appearance of individual homes were primarily variations of ornamentation. All houses were strongly expressive of the Galician or Bukovynian folk architectural tradition (see fig. 1).

The common practice of orienting the facade southward distinguished Ukrainian farmsteads from those of many of the other European and Anglo-Saxon settlers.[3] This practice served to collect heat and light from the sun, to protect the entrance from cold north and northwesterly winds, and to fulfil religious traditions. The home was designed such that the largest room had its end wall facing the east. On or against this wall were placed the religious icons, family portraits and other treasures brought from the homeland.

Houses were rectangular and, reflecting the structural nature of the building materials, had small openings, some without frames, for windows. Most of the early dwellings had one door only. Where window glass was unavailable, cloth was hung to cover the openings as a protection against insects and weather. Many window sills were of sufficient depth to hold a selection of carefully tended house plants. All the first homes were a single storey and had a steeply pitched roof, providing a wide eave overhanging a porch on the south side. Although built of logs, the Ukrainian dwelling took on a sculptured, plastic look with the addition of multiple coats of mud plaster and lime whitewash, all capped with a massive roof of thatch.

Few tools were used in the construction. Usually of German or Austrian origin, an axe, saw, auger and adze were sufficient. Whatever tools and expertise the settler did not bring from the homeland were garnered from neighbours. Within the extended settlement community was usually a carpenter with a chestful of woodcrafting tools, who would be called in to help with construction. The neighbours all pitched in, and a building bee (*tokla*) was underway.

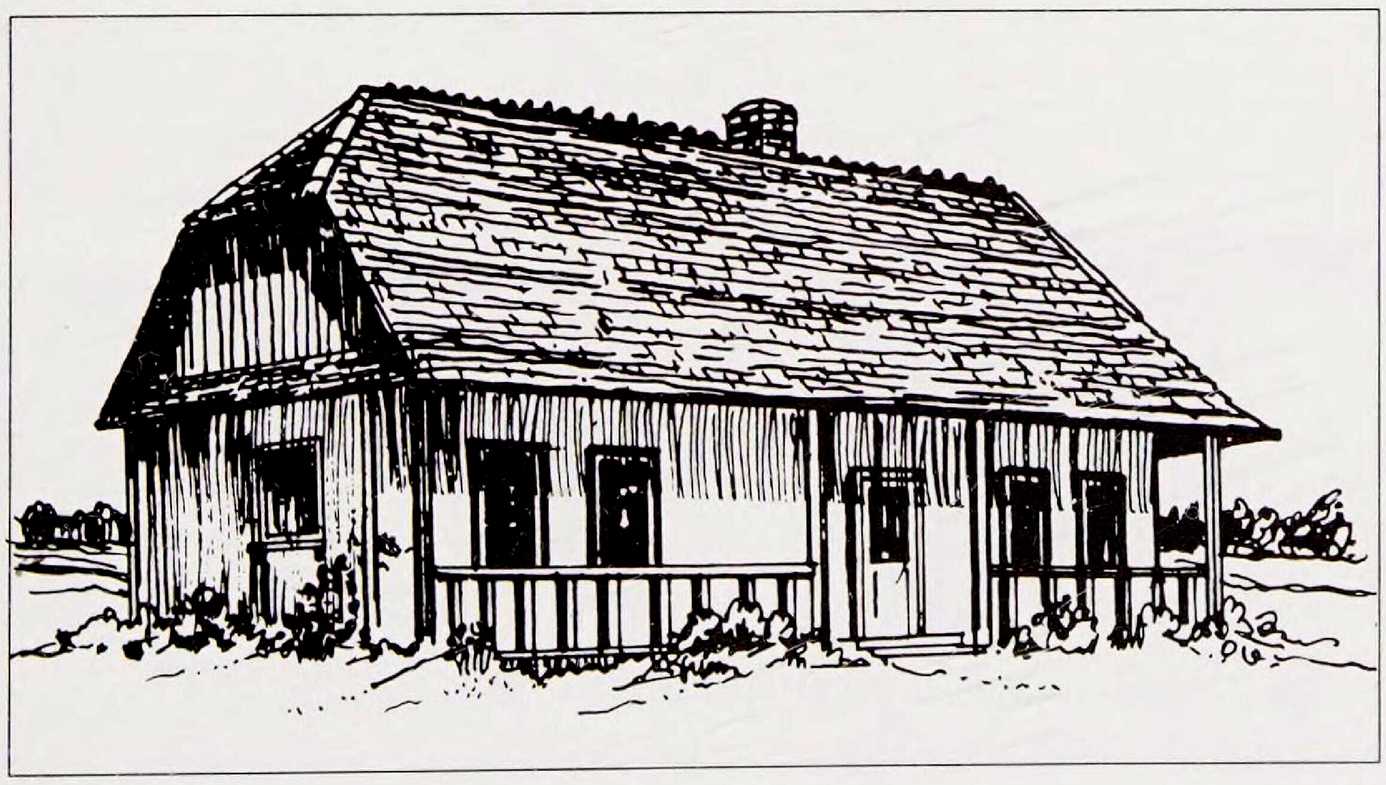


Fig. 1
A Bukovynian settler's house, typical of the homes in the Shepenitż–Boian district of Alberta. (All illustrations courtesy of Roman Fodchuk and Associates, Ltd. Calgary)

House building in the Old Country involved procedures and rituals that were a natural part of an established, close-knit community:

> He would ask his friends to a bee of (carts) wagons (8-10 units) to journey to a known center on the Cheremosh River (or any other place) where there are stores of spruce or oak logs. He buys the required number of logs for the house and all lumber is unloaded in the yard. Then a head carpenter is engaged by day or by finished project. The corner stones are dug deep into the earth, for the braces, and he measures the size of the building with a rope, judging the length and width according to the length of the tree poles. When these underpin logs are "tied" together, work is held up until he carves out a cross on the southeast end. On this, the owner places three silver pieces of money, dried flowers and vegetation from the Thanksgiving Basket which was blessed in church in autumn and seeds from the cones of the wood used. They sprinkle everything with Holy, Blessed Water as they repeat the Lord's Prayer, then begin the next round of logs from this corner and build the house in the *vzrub* pattern, that is, cutting in logs to fit and extend from the corner of the house. Another pattern of building is where corners are strengthened by oak posts dug into the ground and between these posts rails are inserted, with sawed ends (squared ends) fitted into (clefts) spaces between posts. In each of these methods inch diameter wooden nails hold two logs in place; these nails are carefully inserted into a drill-bored hole in each log. For doors and windows, openings are gauged and framed and holes are bored for the wooden nails.[4]

Traditional customs such as these along with the natural resources at hand constituted the basics for building practices among early Ukrainian settlers in Canada.

Wall Construction

For the settler, building the first home began with the straightforward matter of cutting, stockpiling and curing enough logs to form walls and roof. Stone foundations were built to keep the structure up off the ground, thus preventing dampness and keeping insects from invading the house. The foundation also ensured that the bottommost logs would not rot. Logs were scribed lengthwise with a string and marker to duplicate the profile of the lower log upon the upper and then trimmed with a broadaxe to a snug fit. Some builders trimmed off all four sides; others trimmed only the two that met so the interior and exterior walls had natural rounded-log surfaces. Successive layers of logs formed the walls, the corners secured by dovetailing or saddle-notching the joints. Dovetailing was commonly used on logs hewn flat on all four sides, thus ensuring a smooth corner with an even surface for plastering. Saddle-notching was commonly used for joining round logs (see fig. 2).

Additional rigidity in the walls was attained by pegging the logs with long wooden pins. A hole was augered down through several logs, and pins made of harder woods (such as birch or willow) were hammered in. None of the early log homes built by the Ukrainian pioneers used metal nails or spikes. Long hardwood pegs and smaller wooden spikes hold these structures together to this day.

The building was a simple rectangular box with large areas of unbroken wall interrupted by a few windows. As the walls went up, spaces for the door and windows were cut. Window frames were rough sawn. Some settlers brought window glass in their luggage from Ukraine; otherwise, oiled sailcloth or thick kraft paper let the light in. Some settlers had thoughtfully brought their own hinges with them; others fashioned wooden hinges of birch and carved hardwood crotches

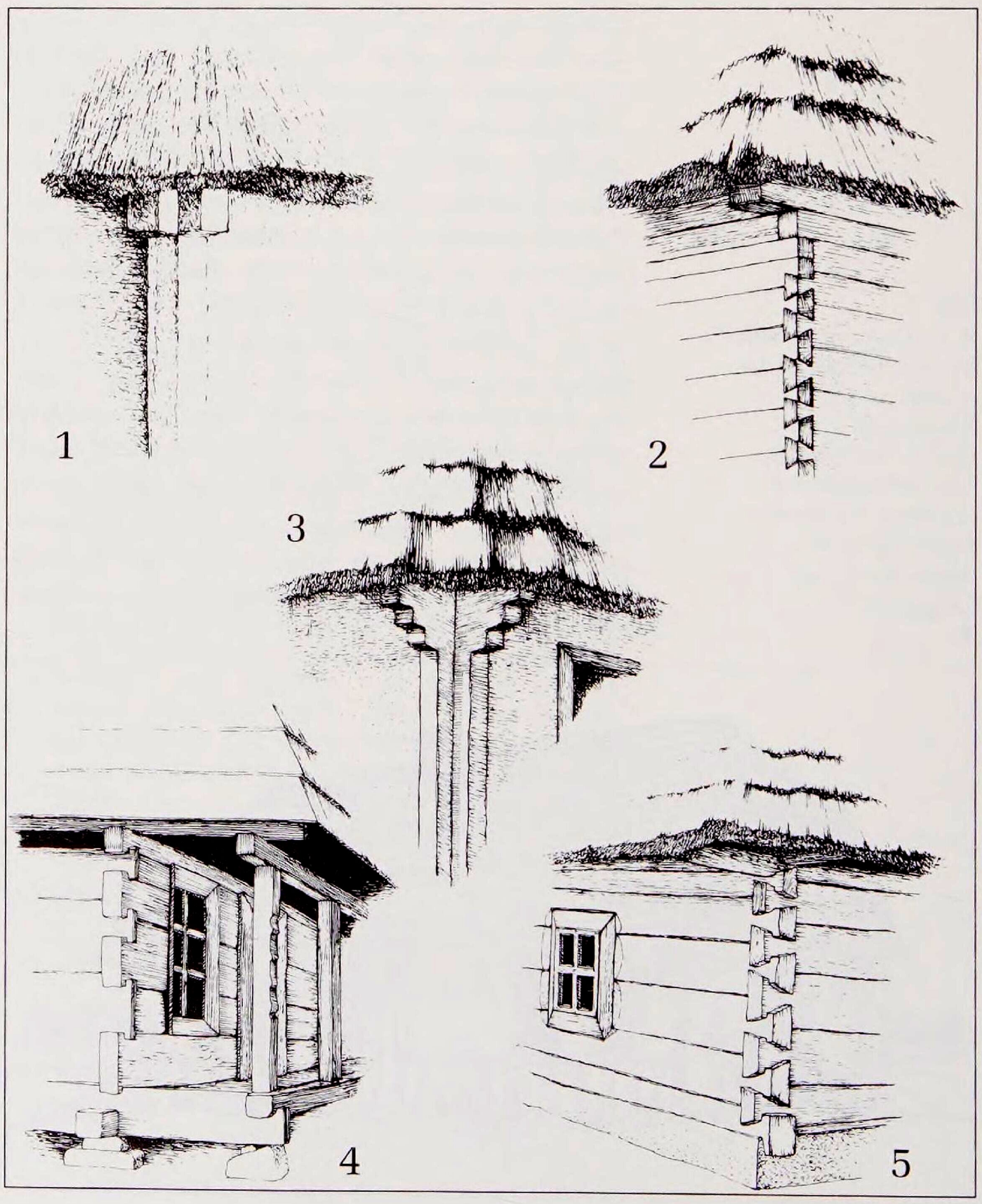


Fig. 2
Types of log construction found in the Willingdon–Shandro settlement area in Alberta.

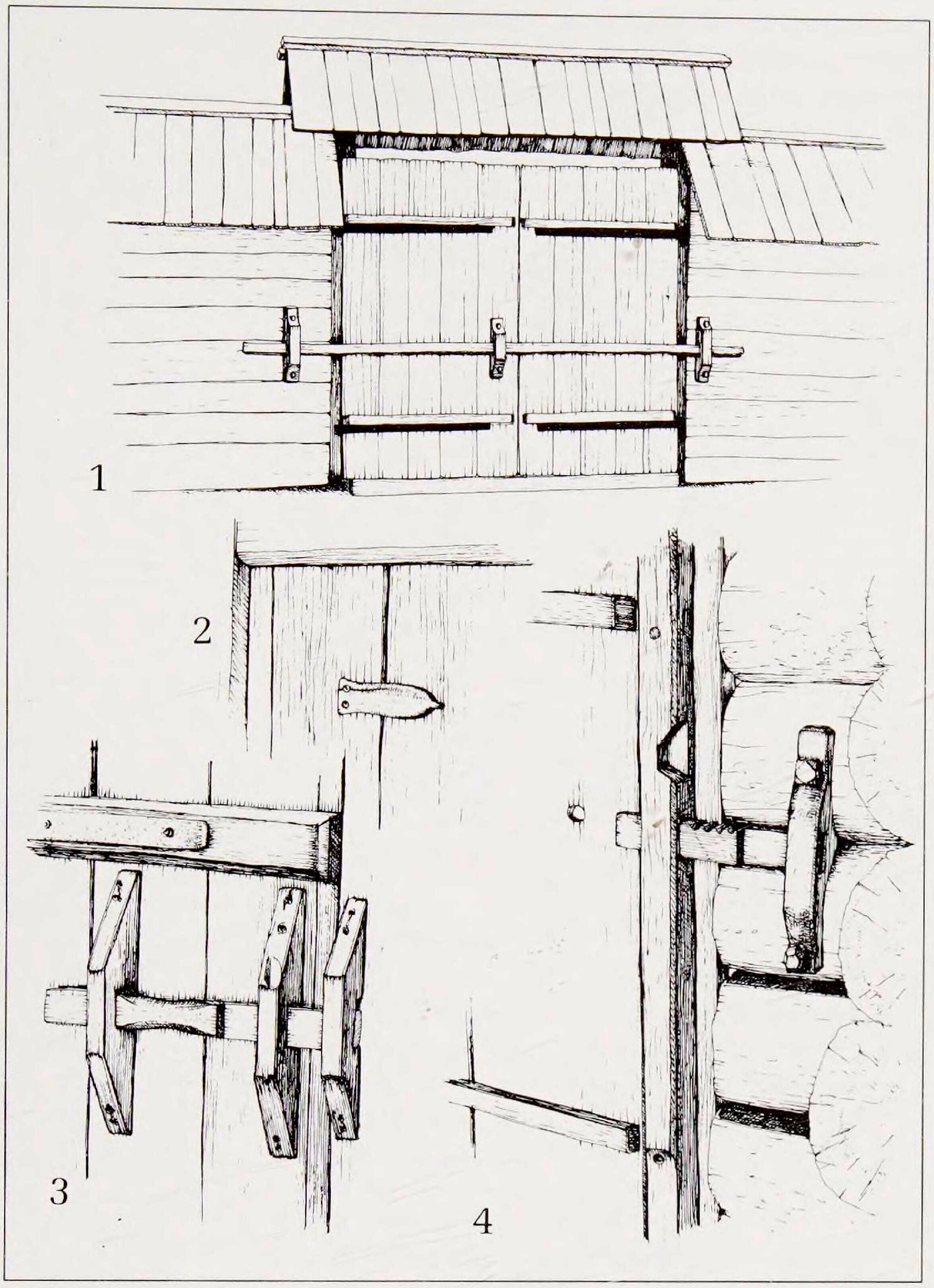


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Fig. 3
Examples of door fastenings found in the Shandro area:
(1) hardwood sliding bar (found on a large granary/barn);
(2) leather hinges;
(3 and 4) handcrafted sliding locks.

reinforced with thick remnants of raw cowhide.[5] The settlers often designed ingenious wooden "locks" to secure their doors. Doors were made of rough-sawn boards spiked to a wooden crosspiece that also served as a hinge and hung on a carved hardwood hinge pin, sometimes with leather braces. The old houses had wooden latches with knobs and a sliding mechanism. To unlock and open these, one reached through a hole in the wall, then inserted an appropriate key into the lock to unlock the latch (see fig.3).

The front wall was often reinforced with a clay bench for sitting. This was polished or smeared with sheep dung to prevent clay from rubbing off or disintegrating too quickly in the rain and sun.

Roof Construction

By far the most striking feature of traditional Ukrainian buildings was the roof. The attic space was equal to, or surpassed that of the ground floor of the house. These large-hipped or hipped gable roofs were steeply pitched when thatched, providing twelve to eighteen inches (31–46 cm) of rise for every foot of run. Usually, the height from eave to ridgepole was one to one and a half times the height of the side wall.

Bukovyian-style houses often had eaves with an overhang that varied from two feet (61 cm) in back to five feet (152 cm) in front. Supported by uprights, these wide eaves provided a shady porch on the south side and protected the walls from rainwash. Galician-style houses tended to have less of an overhang and no porch, and did not appear as top heavy. Galician houses usually had an additional overhang at the gable and at the eave level to protect the lower walls from rain. The end walls, when plastered, were covered with a vertical weatherboard.

These typically Ukrainian roof forms were developed to permit rapid run-off over the porous thatch. The high roofs and wide overhanging eaves remained a prominent feature of Ukrainian farm buildings even after shingles replaced thatch. The settlers selected natural thatch material of local sedges and swamp grasses, later to be replaced with rye straw. To construct the ceiling, squared log beams were laid at intervals of about three feet (91 cm) across the topmost log at right angles to the building. Wooden spikes were driven down through augered holes in the beams and into the wall logs. Poles of smaller diameter were placed every two or three inches (5 or 8 cm) and joined into a ceiling with plugs of twisted slough hay dunked into a slurry of clay.[6] A six- to eight-inch (15- to 20-cm) layer of clay with short straw particles, sometimes strengthened with cow dung, provided excellent insulation against the cold Canadian winters. The large space under the roof was often ventilated through "eyebrow" openings. These were small semicircular apertures built into the roof with a thick protective thatch over them. As the space requirements of the household grew, the attic became living space and eyebrow vents were replaced by dormer windows.[7]

Although the roofs were structurally sound and made of rigid timbers, rafters were not visible to the outside. The undersides of eaves were covered by large fascia boards, hiding the rafters and wall members that served as roof supports. The fascia were carved or shaped and extended at the corners

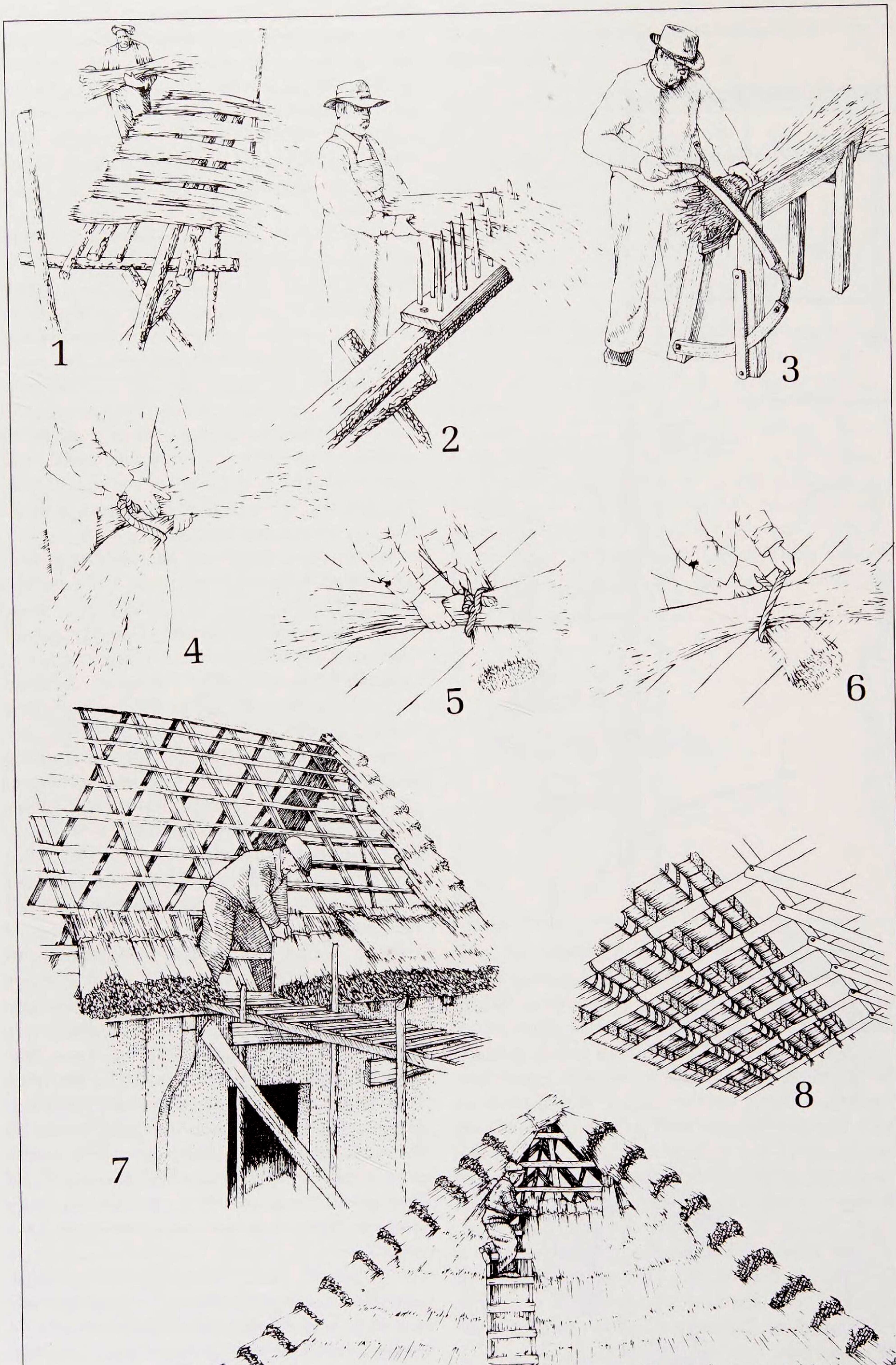

Fig. 4
Stages of the thatching process.
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and wherever secondary walls existed to support the overhanging eaves. If covered with plaster, the boards provided a plastic, outward flaring of the topmost wall logs up to the supporting sill member.

A description of roof construction in Ukraine includes interesting information on the ritual that traditionally accompanied this stage:

> When a wall height of seven feet is reached, then they put on beams (to support the ceiling) which protrude at least one foot over outside walls. On their ends they place roof rails and nail (wooden) these to beams. Beams and rails must be squared and planed smooth. Under the widthwise beams, sometimes they will fit in a lengthwise beam on which the carpenter carves an artistic three-armed Cross, the year of building, and the name of the *gazda*, or owner. This Cross is blackened with candle flame during Epiphany (Jordan January 6 feast) when the priest blesses the new home. "Nests" are cut out at specific spaces on the roof beams (on the roofing beam rails) into which the "heel" of the rafters will fit. These fittings are strengthened with wooden nails. To the rafters are nailed laths and to these later are tied the straw bundles, as roofing.[8]

Thatching

The traditional roofing material of the pioneers' homeland was thatch. Because tall sedges and slough grasses were free for the taking on the Prairies, the Ukrainian settlers continued their thatching traditions in Canada. The advantages of the thatched roof were its excellent insulation, light weight and availability. When the thatch was steeply pitched, generally at about fifty degrees, rain and snow would run off and not permeate and rot the thatch. Gutters were not required. The wide eave overhang carried run-off beyond the walls and out over the porch. It was an ideal material for the long, cold prairie winters.

In Ukraine, rye grass was the preferred material for thatching, but rye was not available until crops were sown and reaped. The earliest settlers had to make substitutions. Prairie grass was too short and was a less effective roofing material than the tall, tough sedges and slough grasses.[9] Combinations of species were commonly used, as the resourceful settlers made do with whatever was most readily available. Once crops were grown, straws of various cereals were tried. Rye was found to be superior as it was long-stemmed and tough; it came to be grown specifically for thatch. It could be used at various stages of growth. Some thatchers chose green rye cut before the kernel had formed, thus eliminating the problem of damage by rodents or birds. Other thatchers advocated the used of ripe, yellow grain, because green thatch had a tendency to dry to a brittle state and break easily.[10] Some thatchers threshed ripe cereals thoroughly to remove the kernels. Others left the kernels on the stalks, relying on stove smoke to thoroughly permeate the thatch and deter fire-fearing rodents.

The Ukrainian settlers in western Canada used several different thatching methods according to the origins and experience of the thatcher. Tools were either brought from the homeland or fashioned on the homestead, then shared among the neighbours. Figure 4 shows standard stages in the thatching process.

The grass was cut with a scythe or serrated sickle, or pulled up by the roots. To dry, it was laid in straight piles or gathered in sheaves. The cleanest and longest straw was then passed through a coarse wooden comb to lay the individual stalks in the same direction and remove tangled leaves and other foreign matter. The thatcher cut the straw into an even length by putting each small sheaf into a cutting box with a knife hinged onto one end. The sharp knife cut across the butt end and ensured even, finished sheaves.

Sheaves of about sixteen inches (41 cm) in diameter initially were split with a twist, forming a double sheaf. Made pliable by soaking briefly in water and joined by a twist of straw, the twin sheaves were bent around the rafter, secured and tightly tucked in under each other to make a solid, tight bond. The first layer of thatch was laid along the eaves; for a trim effect, the straight-cut stubble end was placed downward.

The sheaves applied above the eave layer were placed on the rafters cut-end upward. The grain end of the straw pointed down, creating a smoothly sloping surface by virtue of the irregularly tapered tops. The firmer the thatch's purchase on the roof, the more watertight it became. Successive bundles of thatch provided a thick covering, as each bundle overlaid the previous layer by about three-quarters. At the roof's ridge another layer of thatch, stubble-end down, was secured in place, and loose straw was placed over the sheaf tops. The final touch was a row of thin poles set along either side of the ridge to keep the thatch in position. These poles, secured together to form an X, were set over the ridge about every three feet (91 cm), and the roof was finished.

In 1917 and 1918 a drought in Saskatchewan and southern Alberta created a scarcity

of grain and straw. Farmers from the south came up in carts and traded shingles for the thatch of the roofs on the Ukrainian farmsteads. The southern farmers went home with grain and straw, and the northerners had fine new shingle roofs. That is perhaps one reason why there are so few thatched roofs left in the Ukrainian block in Alberta and Saskatchewan. Another is thatch's susceptibility to fire. The use of shingles provided greater flexibility for the builder, who no longer found it necessary to construct the steeply pitched roof required for thatching.

Mud-Plastered Homes

Unlike other settlers, most Ukrainian pioneers thickly plastered mud on both the inside and outside of their new log homes. Wooden pegs and thin willow laths kept the plaster on the rough log walls. In later buildings, rough-sawn laths were used on squared logs to provide additional purchase.[11] Many of the pioneer Ukrainian houses remaining in the Alberta parkland still boast their original coat of mud plaster.

Clay, straw, manure and water made up the plaster. Topsoil was removed from a sizeable area to ensure access to clean, humus-free clay. Clay and water were mixed in a shallow pit dug into the ground about six inches (15 cm). To break down the clay, the settlers trampled it with their feet or led an ox or horse repeatedly through the pit. To this mixture straw and dung were added. Cow dung was preferred as it was a stronger binder. Finely chopped straw prevented the plaster from cracking upon drying. The mixture was thrown by the handful with enough force to wedge it into the spaces between logs, then smoothed with a wet hand. The plaster was applied in three coats. The primary coating was one or two inches (2.5 or 5 cm) thick; the secondary coat was of finer materials (including sand) about one-quarter inch (0.6 cm) thick; and the outer covering was lime.

Plastering techniques in Ukraine varied only slightly from the above discussion:

> Houses [in the Old Country] are plastered in most cases by men. Two to three wagonloads of a sticky, yellow clay is kneaded on the threshing floor either with bare feet or with horses tramping it as they are circled around on the threshing floor. A small amount of water would be added together with manure and crushed straw to warrant a gooey, sticky, lumplessly smooth plaster. This well-kneaded clay is thrown with force by handfuls into the chinks of the wall and smoothed by hand. A narrow length of board is used to even out any unevenness in the thickness. When the walls have dried, fine cracks will inevitably develop. Another coat of plaster is called for—this time a thinner version of the same clay—or it may be "glazed" with a mixture of clay which is carefully and thoroughly kneaded with dung and sand, after which it is ready for the lime whitewash.[12]

It is noteworthy that mud plastering in the Old Country was usually men's work. Many of the pioneers interviewed and much of the literature written on the subject suggests that in Canada, women played a major role in this aspect of home construction.

After drying and the patching of any cracks, the plaster was coated with a mixture of slaked lime and water. Sometimes skim milk and a little washing blue were added. Lime was brought in large chunks, put into a big container, water was poured over it, and the mix was heated. It would boil and then slacken. The slaked lime formed a thick, smooth paste, almost like butter. Some of this was mixed with sand and water and was then brushed onto the walls.[13] An aesthetically pleasing white stucco resulted which served to protect the exterior walls from disintegration by rainwash. The lime also protected the house from insect invasion.

The plaster had a tendency to crack, and although long-lasting when well maintained, would deteriorate rapidly if neglected. As protection against the two great hazards, children and poultry, many houses were later covered with shiplap to the level of the window sills.

Window and door frames were often painted in bright, contrasting colours, such as yellow, blue, red or green. Sometimes shingled roofs and trim shared the same colour. The inner and outer walls, when completely encased in earth plaster, provided insulation superior to that produced by the common North American practice of chinking between the logs with mud and moss.

Occasionally, the timber walls were left exposed. Usually these houses were built by settlers who came from the mountainous area of the Hutsuls in Carpathia. Traditionally, the Hutsuls built with large trees, so their homes did not need insulating plaster. Hutsul settlers in areas of Alberta where good pine stands were accessible were able to continue their building traditions. Families in the Shandro district of Alberta used the excellent timber of the North Saskatchewan River and never plastered the exterior of their buildings.[14]

House Interior

The traditional Ukrainian pioneer home, rectangular and south-facing, was divided into two large rooms, generally separated by a hallway or vestibule used as a utility area. Sometimes the ceiling was made of planed and jointed boards.[15] Where constructed with small poles, it was plastered on both sides like the walls, then the inside ceiling was white-washed together with the walls. The steeply pitched roof created a large, open attic. Access to the attic was either through a hatch in the central vestibule, or through a trap door under the wide, overhanging eave on the outside of the house. In houses where the chimney ended at the attic level, the smoke dissipated through vents in the thatch, providing a perfect place for hanging meat and fish to cure. Strings of fruit slices and bunches of herbs and flowers were dried and stored here. Dampness was not a problem, so the attic was used for storing clothes and provided extra sleeping space for large families.[16] Practically all the early homes had earthen floors, composed of a hard-stamped clay mixture with a hardened surface.[17] The floor was given a regular coating of a mixture of cow dung and water, which upon drying gave a polished effect—a precursor to modern linoleum.

The west room was the family gathering place where they cooked, ate, socialized and slept. This warm, busy room was dominated by the clay *pich* (pronounced "peech") which served as stove, oven, heater and warm sleeping platform.

The *pich* was made of the same materials as the house—wood and mud. First, a strong wooden bench about three feet (91 cm) high was constructed in the inside corner of the room. The space under the bench was used to store firewood. The top platform of the bench was built up with a brick-thick layer of mud plaster, over which a cylindrical frame of flexible willow branches was constructed. A thick layer of clay mud was spread over the frame, and the whole was reinforced with pleached willow wood to ensure a sturdy outer structure. Mud was packed solidly over sand fill, then covered with a thick layer of plaster. The top of the cylindrical structure was levelled to form a wide bench, providing a warm sleeping place for the children or the elderly. All the surfaces were gently but firmly beaten with a wooden mallet to make the clay firm and dense. As the clay dried and cracks began to appear, another coat of clay would be solidly packed on. At the side of the *pich* a firebox for cooking was built of fired clay brick or stones. A hood in front of the opening of the *pich* collected the smoke. A chimney of pleached willow reinforced with mud plaster was built in front of and above the oven.[18] When the oven was completed, a fire was built inside to burn out the willow frame and fire the clay.[19] Once the structure cooled, a finishing layer of mud was smoothed on the walls inside the oven.

To use the *pich* for cooking, a fire was built inside the oven to heat it, then the coals were cleaned out with a long *kotsuba*, a wooden hoe-like implement. The heat was retained for baking by closing the oven door. The chimney, being outside the oven, did not draw out the hot air once the oven door was in place. To regulate the heat, the door was opened or closed by degrees. Baking and roasting were done inside the *pich* oven, while boiling and frying were done on the *shparhut*.[20] (A cast-iron plate with either three eight-inch [20-cm] lids, or a concave hollow in the cooking surface, the *shparhut* fit over the firebox.)[21]

An outdoor *pich* was often built using the same materials and techniques. During the summer, baking was done outside to keep the house cool. The outdoor *pich* was covered with a thatch of grass or hay, or a tarpaulin to keep the rain from destroying the mud plaster.

With experience, the women learned how to bring the oven to a desired temperature, building a fire in size and intensity to suit the particular food being cooked. After raking the ashes from the hot oven, the cook tested the heat in one of a number of ways. Some merely reached inside the oven to "feel" the heat. Others scraped the bottom with a wooden *kotsuba* to see if sparks flew. Still other women threw a piece of straw or paper into the *pich* to see if it would singe or flare. When the temperature was right, food was placed in the hot oven with flat wooden *lopata* (spatula).

The door of the *pich* was usually a large board propped shut with a stick. Meticulous bakers sealed the door with clay. The oven cooked slowly, allowing a woman to spend the day in the fields knowing the meal would be cooked and warm when the family returned in the evening.

The meals cooked in the *pich* were served on tables roughly hewn from planks. Most of the furniture was homemade; a family might spend its evenings sitting on wooden benches and stools, and its nights on homemade beds or plank platforms. For the latter, planks were laid across benches and the resulting platform was spread with straw. Some pioneers wove firm straw mattresses, which were rolled up

when not in use. Fluffy feather pillows and quilts (*pyryna*) containing wild goose down and duck feathers were common.

The west room might also contain the quern mill or *zhorna*, a hand mill used for flour and other food milling purposes.[22] It was made from specially selected fieldstones common in the area. Most homes had a cabinet for dishes attached to the wall next to a row of wooden pegs on which clothes were hung. The wooden boxes and chests in which the pioneers carried their possessions from Ukraine could be found in either the west or east room depending upon how ornate they were. Carved chests were reserved for the storage of clothing and other finery (see fig. 5).

The east room was considered special: the best and brightest room, where the family's weaving and sewing crafts, handiwork and treasures from the Old Country were displayed and where social gatherings were held. Tapestries of wool, hemp or flax in coloured geometric patterns covered the beds and benches and hung from the walls at ceiling level. A tablecloth covered the long table. On long pegs and on a high shelf attached to the inside wall, scarves, newly woven lengths of cloth, sheepskin coats and Sunday clothes were placed. Wooden chests were filled with the best finery. In the corner was a cupboard, and above it, a shelf. On the vast wall hung the icons brightened by wreaths of paper flowers, herbs and dried native field flowers.

Grandparents slept in the east room when they lived with a married son and grandchildren in an extended family. In later years, the resourceful settler often passed a long sleeve of stovepipes horizontally through the dividing wall and into the east room before directing the smoke through the roof. Later, a wood stove was introduced to heat the large east room.

The Ukrainians who settled in the Prairies had to use Canadian materials in building their new homes. Yet as much as possible, they maintained the building techniques and traditions of Ukraine, even to the religious ceremony that marked the home's completion:

> A newly built home was usually blessed and then the priest, dressed in robes, would sprinkle it with holy water, insert into each corner stone space a small picture of a disciple, and seal the pictures in. These holy duties were followed by a dinner at which offerings of bread [the small round *kolachi*] were handed out as gifts in memory of their deceased ones.[23]

Fig. 5
Settlers' trunks and chests (renderings based on chests at the Shandro Museum, Shandro, Alberta):
(1) iron-bound trunk with a cast padlock; (2) utility chest; (3,4 and 5) decorative carved chests used for storing family heirlooms, ceremonial clothing and family treasures.
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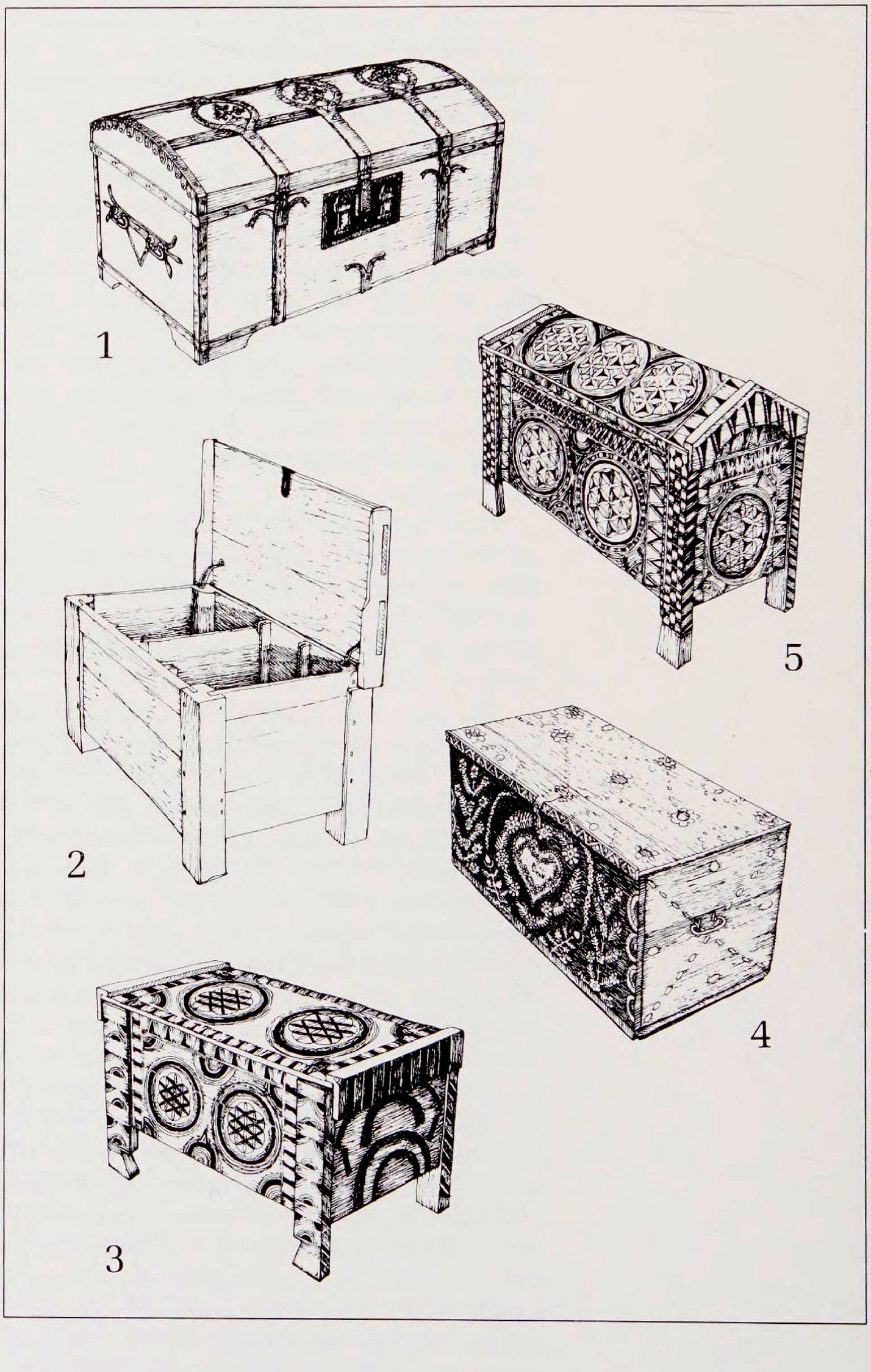

Notes

1. John Lehr, *Ukrainian Vernacular Architecture in Alberta*, Occasional paper no. 1 (Edmonton: Alberta Culture, Historic Sites Service, Historic Resources Division, 1976).
2. From an interview with Harry Zukiwsky, Willingdon, Alberta, July 1988. Zukiwsky is the elder son of a pioneering family; his father was a carpenter tradesman.
3. "Master Plan—Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village: Farmstead Group Building Selection Report" (Calgary: Roman Fodchuk and Associates, July 1978). All houses in this unpublished field survey of nineteen early homesteads were found to be facing south. Most of the observations and data in the present report were confirmed by Fodchuk's field study.
4. An English translation of material in Ukrainian found in the collection of Peter Svarich (1891–1964) housed by the Provincial Archives of Alberta, Edmonton (PAA collection no. 75.74, document no. 82.225 [1934]).
5. Interview with Zukiwsky.
6. Lehr, *Ukrainian Vernacular Architecture*, p. 12.
7. "Master Plan."
8. Svarich collection.
9. Wasyl Zazula, *Pioneer Memories* (Willingdon, Alberta: W. Zazula, 1983). Zazula was thoroughly acquainted with traditional thatching practices, having thatched several early homes in the Shandro and Willingdon districts of east central Alberta. He was interviewed at Shandro by the present author in 1977 and in 1978.
10. Interview with Zazula.
11. Lehr, *Ukrainian Vernacular Architecture*, p. 18.
12. Svarich collection.
13. From an interview with Fred Magera, Willingdon, Alberta, 1978. Magera was the District Agriculturist in the Willingdon region and was thoroughly acquainted with the early pioneering practices of the Bukovynian and Galician settlers in this area.
14. Interview with Zazula.
15. *Memories of Mundare* (Mundare, Alberta: Mundare Historical Society, 1980), p. 481. A historical account of the Peter Siracky family describes the building of their second house.
16. From an interview with Anna Rajczyba-Pidruchney, long-time resident of Vegreville, Alberta. Interview in Edmonton, 1987.
17. *Memories of Mundare*, p. 487. A historical account of the Stepanski family describes their pioneer home with clay floors.
18. Gwen Dowsett, "Folk Housing: The Vernacular Architecture of the Ukrainian People in Manitoba," *Border Crossings* 5, no. 4 (September 1986), pp. 12–20.
19. Interview with Zukiwsky.
20. Based on field studies by Roman Fodchuk and Associates in the Shandro–Smoky Lake and Shepentz areas of Alberta. See also "Master Plan."
21. The present author made a field trip to verify the construction of two existing examples of a *pich* with a *shparhut* in the Willingdon area with Harry Zukiwsky in 1988.
22. From an interview with Helen Solowan Boychuk, Willingdon–Shandro, Alberta, 1978.
23. Svarich collection.

Research Notes

Notes de recherche

Ukrainian Folk Medicine in Canada

ANDREA K. KLYMASZ

There is a revival of interest in folk remedies in modern society; the established validity of Western medicine is being questioned while holistic, naturopathic and other medical systems gain renewed vigour.[1] Unlike such popular health systems as chiropractic and psychic healing,[2] Ukrainian folk medicine is largely unrecognized in Canada, yet it remains viable. Typically, Ukrainian folk healers in Canada are women who have learned the art of healing from their mothers or other relatives. This oral transfer of healing techniques has lately been replaced by tape recording the incantations to be used for future reference.[3]

The Old World Experience

Historically, Ukrainians and other Slavic peoples treated ailments within the family, of which some member (usually an elderly woman) was experienced in treatment and nursing. However, diagnosis and healing of disease with a supposedly magical or supernatural pathogenesis was left to specialists: medicine men and women.[4] The magical causes of sickness were believed to be demonic possession, inimical witchcraft and punishment by offended deities. Great distress, fear and other strong effects were, in the opinion of the Slavs, of great significance in the occurrence and development of certain maladies and could even cause death.

Therapeutic agents among the ancient Slavic peoples included hydrotherapy, massage, blood-letting and some surgical procedures. Steam baths were not only preventive measures: they were an important procedure in curing certain diseases. Massage also had a justification: it endeavoured to press the disease out of the body. In the same way attempts were made to suck out the malady through blood-letting. Children were especially endangered by evil spirits and were therefore decked with amulets and sometimes called false names. The most popular amulets were made from the teeth of bear, boar and wolf; birds' bones; objects of metal, glass and amber; and the roots of some plants. Most commonly, the amulets were hung around the neck or wrist, either threaded or in a leather pouch. This pagan custom has adopted the symbols of Christianity and continues to be in use today.[5]

The Canadian Experience

Ukrainian folk medicine in Canada continues to use many of the ancient Slavic techniques.[6] Practices performed on the patient's person constitute one of two major types of technique. The measures taken here seek to remove or chase out the illness that has invaded the patient's body. This group of practices favours three techniques, all of which can be readily performed: hot wax in cold water; fire; cupping.

Some people believe that the most dangerous source of diseases is a spell, cast by either a person's gaze or praise.[7] A cast spell places "evil" within the victim. This condition is commonly referred to as evil eye. The divination and treatment process for evil eye involves melted wax or hot coals placed into cold water. The water must be untouched; it can be drawn from a tap or well. A dish or bowl of water is placed over the patient's head and the healer pours in the wax, while reciting the Lord's Prayer in Ukrainian three times. The wax forms a shape in the cold water, symbolic of the person or thing that has frightened the patient. As part of the healing process, the patient washes his or her face with the water and drinks some of it. The patient is now cured—unfrightened and free from evil eye. Hot coals may be used instead of wax.

Inflammation in the eye (*rožа*) or any other part of the body is treated by placing a red cloth over the inflamed area. Nine cotton balls, soaked in alcohol, are placed on the cloth and set aflame. The heat that radiates through the

cloth cures the inflammation. The skin disease erysipelas is also treated by tying a red sash on the infected area, then placing oakum on the sash and igniting it.[8]

Striking pain in a person's arm or back due to muscle cold or pneumonia is treated by cupping.[9] The insides of several jars are wiped with alcohol and lit with a match. The burning alcohol eats up the oxygen, creating a vacuum; when the jars are placed, open end, on the skin and affected area, the skin is immediately drawn up into the jar. The drawn tissue contains "bad blood" and is punctured to allow the blood to be drawn out.

The second major group of healing techniques includes practices that are performed neither on the patient's person nor on any objects related to the patient. This group includes prayers to placate offended people or spirits, as well as the use of sacred pictures, icons, amulets and pendants believed to harbour healing powers.[10] Holy pictures and icons are believed to transmit powers from God or the supernatural world when prayed to for the healing of mental and physical afflictions. The wearing of amulets (usually but not exclusively religious in nature) by children is meant to ward off evil eye and bad spirits; similarly, the wearing of pendants and amulets by adults is intended to ward off or eliminate dangers.

All healing procedures incorporate various objects. The objects in the two major groups of healing techniques can be separated into three functional categories: natural and primary elements; agents of transmission; and receptacles.

Natural and primary elements include water and fire, which are pure and non-malleable. This category could also include beeswax and coal or charcoal, which are products of nature. All these elements are purifying within the Ukrainian folk healing techniques outlined. The use of water and the act of drinking it and washing one's face in it are symbolic of purification and functions to rid one's self of evil eye. Agents of transmission include the red cloth, alcohol and cotton balls used to treat inflammation. The use of a red-coloured cloth for erysipelas is a sympathetic remedy, since erysipelas produces scarlet-red blotches on skin.[11] Holding utensils, containers and receptacles include the jars used in cupping, for example. The bowl or dish used in curing evil eye functions as a holding artifact and also belongs in this category.

It is likely that all three categories of artifacts are universally applicable and not limited to the Ukrainians in Canada. However, the objects may be used differently in keeping with the specifics of other ethno-cultural patterns and conditions.

▲
Fig. 1
Vorožka *("The Soothsayer") painting by Jeanette Shewchuk of Warren, Man., showing the traditional Ukrainian divination/ healing technique of pouring molten wax into a bowl of cold water held over the patient while reciting a prayer. (Courtesy of Canadian Museum of Civilization, neg. no. K86-594)*

Notes

1. For general discussions of folk medicine see Wayland D. Hand, American Folk Medicine (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976) and Edith Fowke and Carole Carpenter, Explorations in Canadian Folklore (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1985) pp. 237–52.

2. By "popular health systems," I refer to systems that are too print-oriented to be clearly folk but which do not sufficiently dominate the cultural mainstream to be considered "official." This would include such systems as chiropractic, psychic healing and Christian Science. See David J. Hufford, "Folk Healers," in *Handbook*

of American Folklore, Richard M. Dorson, ed. (Bloomington, Ill.: Indian University Press, 1983), pp. 306–13.

3. As technology changes, so does the method of transferring information. There is a Ukrainian healer in Gilbert Plains, Manitoba, who has a cassette of her healing prayers and incantations given to her by a previous healer. Collected in 1987 by Andrea K. Klymasz.
4. For discussions of ancient Slavic medicine and Ukrainian folk medicine, see Mirko Drazen Grmek, "Ancient Slavic Medicine," *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences,* 14, no. 1 (January 1959) pp. 18–40; the entry on "Folk medicine" in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine,* vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984) pp. 907–8; and P. Kemp, *Healing Ritual: Studies in the Technique and Tradition of the Southern Slavs* (London: Faber and Faber, 1935).
5. For a contemporary use of amulets see Gregory Gizelis, "The Use of Amulets Among Greek-Philadelphians," *Pennsylvania Folklife* 20, no. 3 (Spring 1971), pp. 30–37.
6. My current research shows that Ukrainian-Canadian healers still practise some of the healing techniques mentioned, primarily to cure evil eye.
7. See Kazimierz Moszynski, "Medycyna" in *Kultura Ludowa Stowian,* vol. 2, pt. 1 ("Kultura duchowa") (Warszawa: Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1967), pp. 175–232; and Peter H. Stephenson, "Pshrien: Hutterite Belief in Evil Eye and Concepts of Child-Abuse." *Papers from the Fifth Annual Congress,* 1978 Canadian Ethnology Society, Paper no. 62, Joan Ryan, ed. (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service, 1980) pp. 113–7.
8. Erysipelas is a febrile disease characterized by inflammation and redness of the skin and subcutaneous tissues due to streptococci bacteria. The visible symptoms are round or oval patches on the skin that promptly enlarge and spread, becoming swollen, tender and red. The affected skin is hot to the touch. Headache, vomiting, fever and sometimes complete prostration can occur. See *Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing, and Allied Health* (Philadelphia, Pa.: W.B. Saunders, 1978), p. 354.
9. Moszyński, "Medycyna," point no. 155.
10. See the entry on "icons" in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine,* vol. 2, and the recently announced publication of Stefan Moutafov, *Bulgarian Icons Devoted to the Science of Healing* (Sofia, Bulgaria: Academy of Sciences, 1988[?]).
11. This is an example of "like curing like." Moszyński, "Medycyna," point no. 158.

Exhibitions and Collections

Expositions et collections

"A Woman's Work" : Curator's Report

Olya S. Marko

Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, "A Woman's Work: An Introduction to the Art of Ukrainian Ritual Breads."

Curator: Olya S. Marko.
Installation: Michael Zajac.
Lighting: Barry Hillman.
Duration: 6 December 1987 to 31 January 1988.

Bilingual catalogue (Ukrainian/English): *A Woman's Work: An Introduction to the Art of Ukrainian Ritual Breads.* Winnipeg: Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, 1987. 28 pp., 10 colour photo-illus., bibl. Paper $10. ISBN 0-921741-0202.

Our conceptual approach for an exhibition on Ukrainian ritual breads was to some extent an outgrowth of the stimulating work of others who, like Judy Chicago,[1] had embedded in the public consciousness the notion that so-called women's work can be art. Chicago and her associates employed various skills, including traditional and non-traditional craft techniques, but shifted the context of their display from shopping centres and church basements to exhibition environments that are normally used to isolate and define expressions of art.

Fig. 1
Onlookers at the official opening of "A Woman's Work" exhibition, 13 December 1987. (Photograph courtesy of Andrew Sikorsky)
▼

The craft-as-art that this exhibition focussed upon was Ukrainian ritual bread which has its roots in prehistory and prevails today within the Ukrainian-Canadian community at major celebrations such as Christmas and weddings. For "Oseredok" (which means "centre" in English and serves as the local nickname for Winnipeg's Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre), this exhibition proved to be one of its most successful ever: it had everything—community involvement, beautiful objects to exhibit, striking design and lighting, volunteer participation, an exhibition catalogue, lots of good will, generous lenders and talented artists. The experience proved that a small institution like ours could undertake a relatively complex exhibition project and succeed on a shoestring budget.

We began our curatorial preliminaries and research in the fall of 1986. At the onset, it was decided to scout the local Ukrainian community and obtain one hundred breads for the exhibition. Initially, this seemed an unreachable goal. We finally assembled approximately two hundred specimens, almost all of them provided voluntarily by their makers as loans to the exhibition. Some of these were brought in "fresh" only hours before the exhibition opening. Fortunately, we foresaw this problem and allowed for flexibility in installation and design to accommodate late deliveries.

The exhibition catalogue for "A Woman's Work" was professionally designed by our long-time volunteer, Orest Kinasewych, and included the photographic artistry of

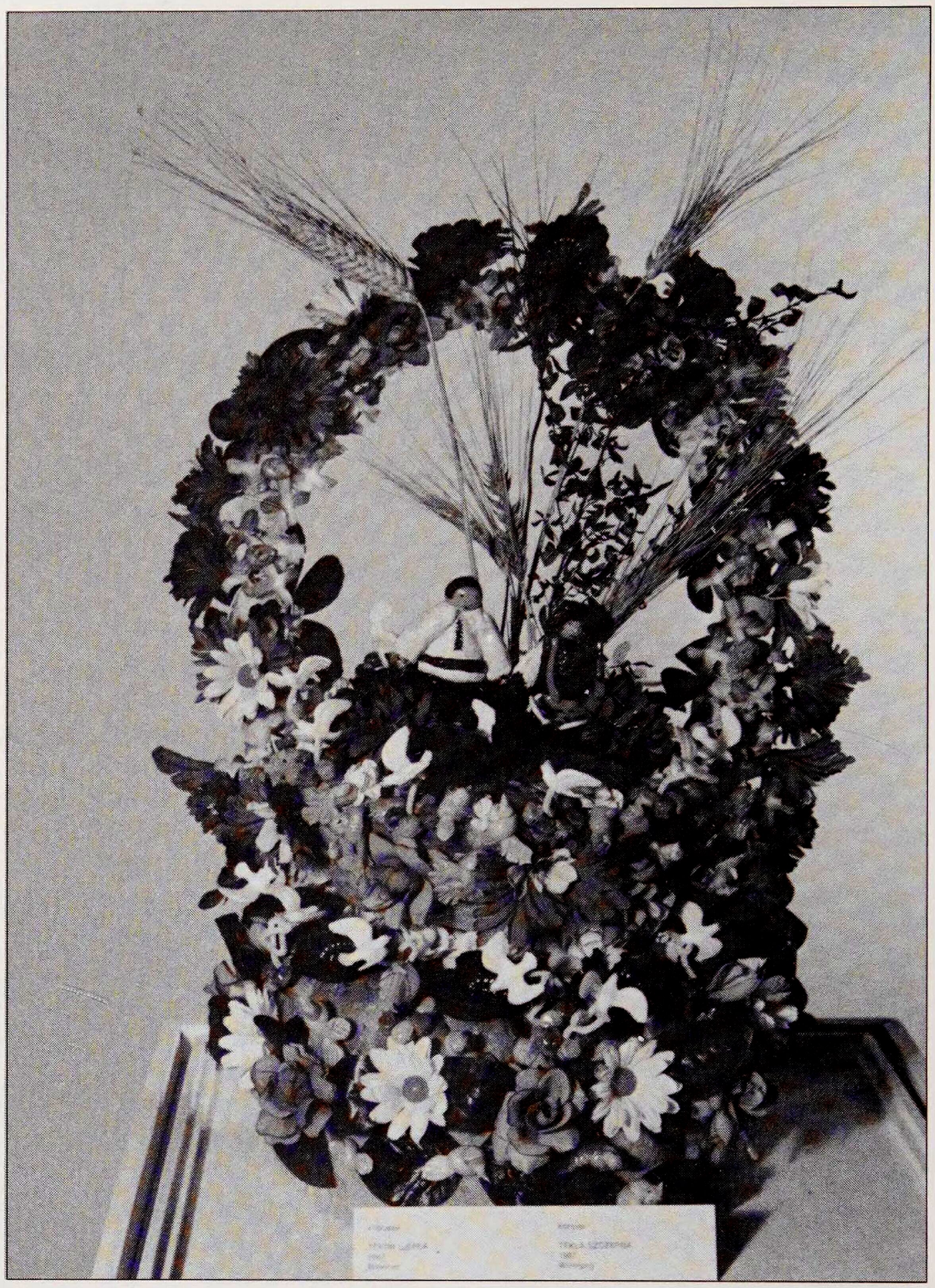

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Fig. 2
Traditional Ukrainian wedding bread, or korovai, *by T. Szczerba of Winnipeg, Man., 1987. (Photograph courtesy of Nick Teterenko)*

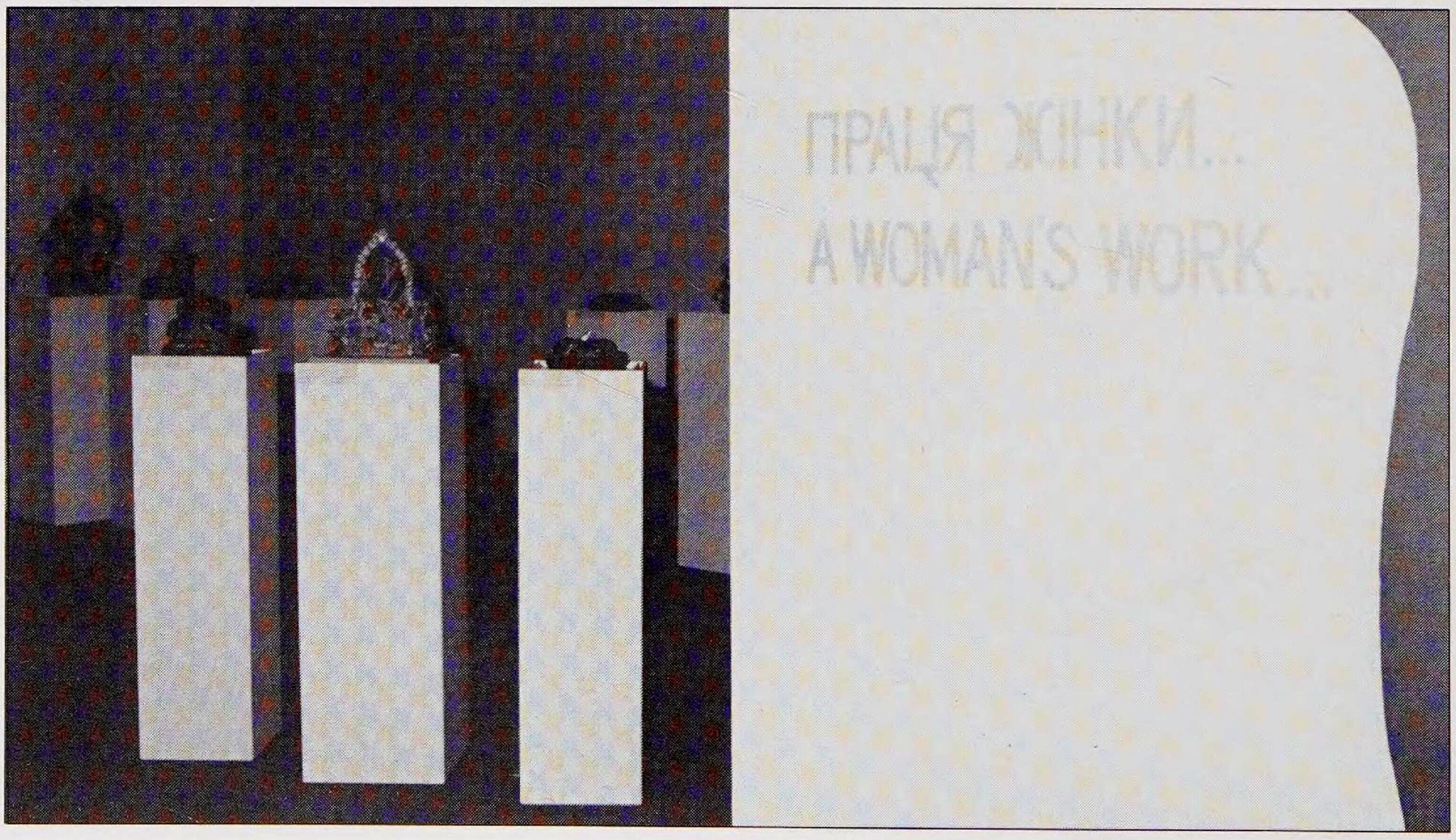

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Fig. 3
Exhibition entrance. (Photograph courtesy of Andrew Sikorsky)

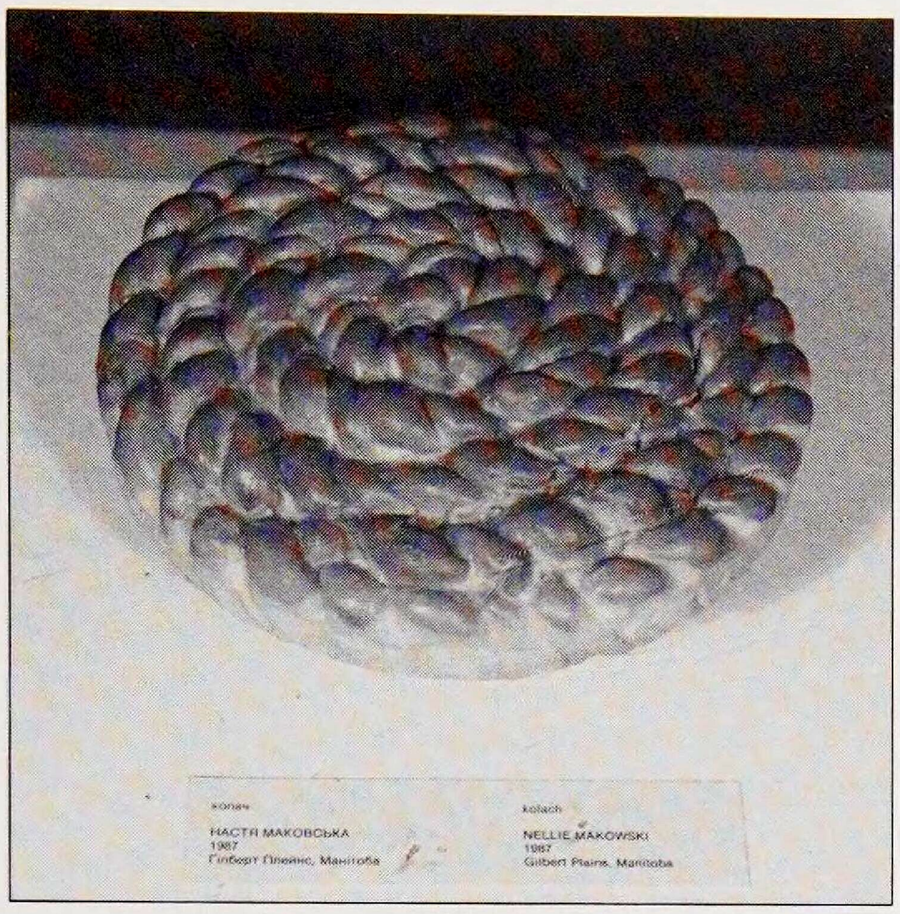

Fig. 4
A Christmas bread known as kolach, *made by N. Makowski of Gilbert Plains, Man., 1987. (Photograph courtesy of Nick Teterenko)*

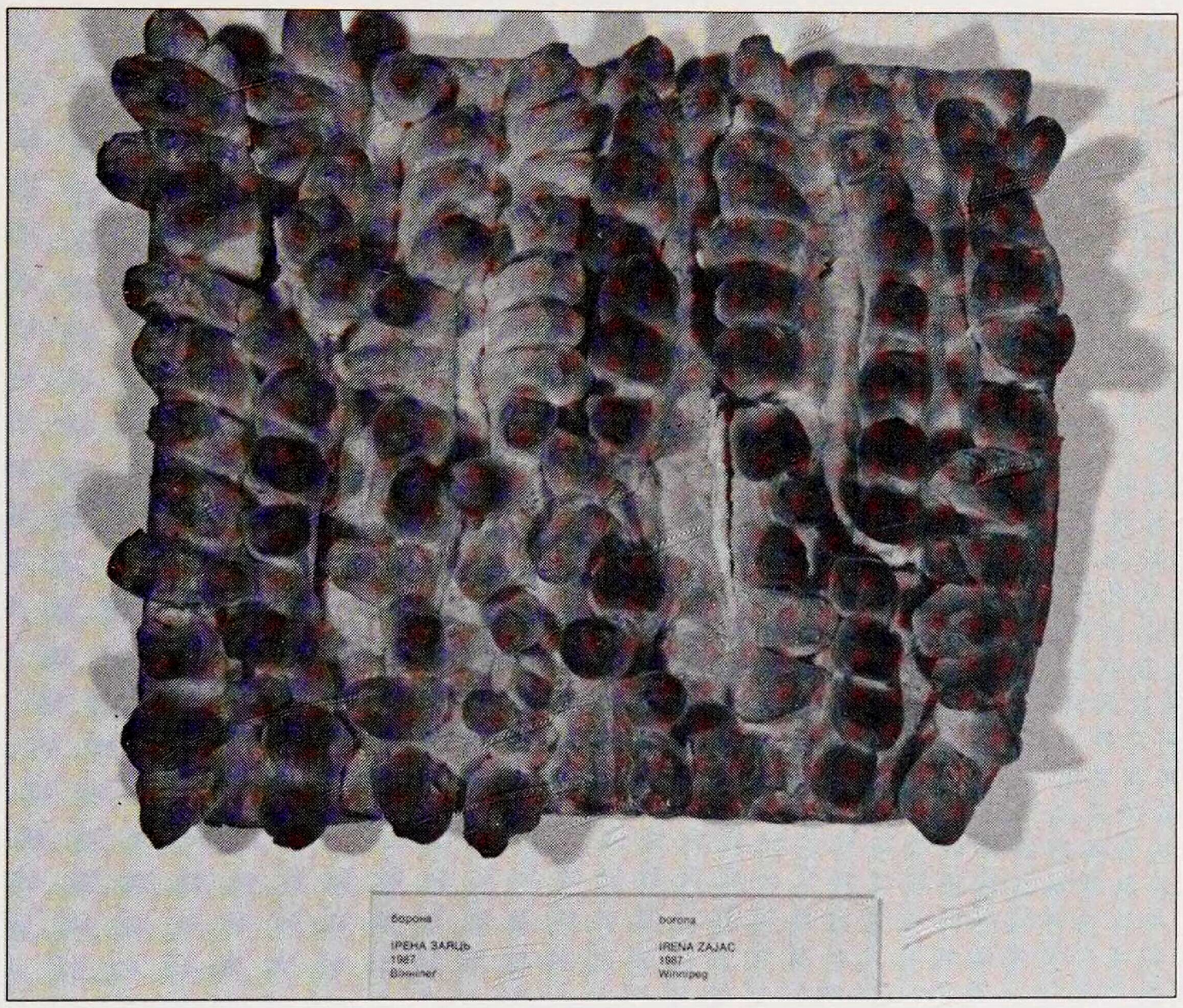

Fig. 5
A wedding bread called borona *(literally, "harrow") traditionally baked by the bridegroom's family as part of nuptial customs, by I. Zajac of Winnipeg, Man., 1987. (Photograph courtesy of Nick Teterenko)*

David Firman of Winnipeg. The result of their combined efforts was cited with an award by the Western Canada Art Association (category: "photographic reproduction in full colour catalogues"). At the conclusion of the exhibition, breads were selected for possible inclusion in the Centre's permanent collections. Our curatorial aide, Nick Teterenko, arranged for over a quarter of the specimens to be donated by their lenders for this purpose.

Visitors to the exhibition were able to appreciate the diversity of breads and decorative elements inherent in their construction. We found that placing a bread upon a white pedestal very dramatically underlined its aesthetic value and related it to other, more accepted and established art forms such as sculpture. This display technique was instrumental in helping us convince the viewer that the making of a Ukrainian ritual bread is a creative process that goes beyond simple utilitarianism or ritual enhancement.

Notes

1. Judy Chicago, *Through the Flower* (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1977), p. 103.

The Ukrainian Museum of Canada

VERA A. NOKONY

The Ukrainian Museum of Canada (UMC), with headquarters in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, is one of the country's finest specialized ethnographic museums. Four volunteer-operated branches of the UMC in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Toronto complete the museum network. Together, they house an outstanding collection specializing in textiles.

Quantitatively, the Saskatoon collection alone totals almost 30,000 items. Qualitatively, there are four components of the collection, namely, ethnographic and historical artifacts, works of art, archival materials and library materials.

The ethnographic and historical artifacts are subdivided into the following groups.

Embroidery: These include more than 500 men's and women's shirts and/or blouses (*sorochky*), recognizable as to region by traditional patterns, stitches and colours. As an example, garments from the Kiev region are worked in *nyzynka*, an embroidery pattern worked from the "wrong" side in colours of yellow, orange, red, wine, and black. The embroidery collection also contains towel (*rushnyky*) embroidery with ornamentation of stylized flowers, birds or geometrical design. The *rushnyky* are used in rites of passage (birth, death, marriage) and to decorate the home.

Costume items: About 2000 articles are found in this category including leather jackets or short coats (*kyptari*), usually associated with the Carpathian region; long coats (*kozhukhy*); long white scarves, handwoven, embroidered or beaded at the ends (*khustyny* and *peremitky*); wrap-around skirts (*obhortky*); long fitted jackets (*korsetky*); jewelry, footwear, and headwear.

Weaving: These come from almost all areas of Ukraine. Hand-loomed, beautifully designed rugs or carpets (*kylymy*), bench covers (*nalavnyky*) and woven towels form the largest part of the collection.

Costumed dolls: They wear replicas of costumes from all regions of Ukraine. Each

Fig. 1
Traditional Ukrainian folk costumes and weavings on display in the permanent gallery, Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Saskatoon. (Courtesy of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada)
▼

article of a costume is embroidered or decorated with appropriate and traditional designs, either woven, knitted or appliquéd.

Ceramics: Inherent individualism is expressed by various artists in delicate and intricate motifs executed in designs characteristic of a particular region. Utilitarian pottery and ornamental ceramics reflect the strong ties with the earth. Noteworthy are several pieces of Saskatchewan-crafted pottery, the work of Peter Rupchan, a Bukovynian immigrant. This collection was placed on permanent loan to the UMC by the Government of Saskatchewan as an integral part of Saskatchewan heritage.

Woodcarving (*riz'ba*): This art form was originally used for making household utensils and tools (cheese boards, plates, washboards, bowls) and larger structures. In the collection are woods decorated with burnt-on designs and flat wood carving, some of which are inlaid with various coloured woods, mother-of-pearl, beads, horn or metal.

Easter eggs (*pysanky*): Over 1000 richly decorated Easter eggs in more than one hundred motifs validating ideographic meaning of regional patterns make up this group. Patterns are geometric, in plant and animal motifs or designs from the Trypillian era.

Ritual breads: In this group are symbolic *kalach*, the braided bread used in most ceremonies, and *korovai*, a wedding bread ornamented with doves, pine cones, and greenery and/or flowers. Several intricate designs patiently formed by skilled hands awe observers.

Ecclesiastical artifacts: Priestly vestments, chalices, censers, crosses and icons can be found in this group.

Prominent in the permanent gallery, "The Sons of the Soil," is a miniature model of a house displaying an authentic architectural style with furnishings and such equipment as may be seen in a Ukrainian village home. Agricultural and household supplies, currency (coins) and festive items relating to traditions and customs enhance the authenticity of this production.

Among the 110 paintings in the Museum's art collection is a series of paintings executed by William Kurelek as a special commission by the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada to commemorate Canada's centennial in 1967. The collection, titled "Ukrainian Pioneer Women," includes the following: *A First Meeting of the Ukrainian Women's Association*, *Women Feeding the Threshing Gang*, *A Boorday—the First House*, *Ukrainian Canadian Farm Picnic*, *Blessing the Easter Paska*, *The Second House*, *Clay Plastering*, *Teaching the Sign of the Cross*, *Making Easter Eggs*, *Ukrainian Christmas Eve Feast*, *Teaching Ukrainian* and *Teaching Ukrainian Embroidery*. In progress at the present time are preparations for a travelling exhibition and a catalogue of this interesting and valuable collection.

Subjects of 3500 slides that are in the Museum's collection include churches and other architecture, historical events and people from the past, regional costumes and crafts (weaving, embroidery, *pysanka*), and the Museum and its activities. A library of about thirty videotapes (VHS) encompasses a variety of titles ranging from *A Traditional Ukrainian Christmas* to *That's My Baba* and *Journey in Time: Our Story*, a tour of the UMC.

The Museum's library–research centre is the repository for about 8000 books (including branch collections). One-third of the core collection is in literature, and another third in history, arts and crafts. Other subjects include religion, music and cooking. Approximately 10,000 serial publications include mainly incomplete collections of periodicals. Most of the library collection is in the Ukrainian language. Photographic records of historic sites and points of interest related to the history of Ukrainians in Canada are also registered in the library collection. A special project to catalogue and inventory all the library collections in Saskatoon and the four branches has been recently completed. The programme was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and a printed catalogue has now been prepared. Because of the unique nature of the resource materials, the UMC has a valuable research capability.

The UMC has striven to fulfil its role of custodian of the Ukrainian heritage while recognizing that the Ukrainian experience shares many common bonds with other cultural groups. Indeed, it is committed to the principle of fostering and encouraging liaison with the general community including museums and galleries, ethnic groups, and educational and cultural institutions. Through the medium of its collections, it has proven to be an effective bridge between the past and present for Ukrainians and other cultures.

Viewpoints

Points de vue

Ukrainian-Canadian Folk Furniture and the Marketplace

Jim Shockey

Nine years ago I walked into an antique store in eastern Canada and produced a picture of a table made in Alberta around 1895 by a Ukrainian settler. The dealer had no difficulty identifying it as a western-Canadian table of "ethnic" origin, stating that the unusual folk form and bright colours were a dead giveaway. He said he would not be interested in buying it because it was not officially antique; however, he suggested I might find a buyer in one of the not-so-discerning dealers. I did finally place the table, happy to accept what was at the time a generous offer of two hundred dollars.

Last week I received a picture in the mail. The picture was of a Ukrainian-Canadian table made in southern Manitoba around the turn of the century. I called a collector and described the table. On his behalf I tendered an offer of $9500, which was accepted by the table's owner. The figure is a Canadian record, the highest price paid for any table of this folk-country genre in Canada.

The majority of the handmade artifacts from eastern Canada are officially antique, not to mention well documented and publicized. Why, then, does a Ukrainian-Canadian table from western Canada, young by comparison at only ninety or so years, break the record price? The answer to this question lies in the marketplace.

Significant settlement of the Canadian West by Ukrainians occurred between 1891 and 1914. Many of these settlers arrived with the clothes on their backs and one or two trunks loaded with treasured possessions or items they thought would not be available in Canada. Items needed for daily use often had to be made. It is these items, made after arrival Canada, that are the most interesting to the marketplace.

Contrary to what many believe, the market for most items brought by the Ukrainians from the old country is limited. Some, such as clay poppy bowls, wooden hechels and religious icons, are important and of interest to museums; however, their commercial value is a fraction of that of the items made here in Canada. The marketplace runs by the strict law of supply and demand. Many items similar to the ones brought to Canada may have been made in Ukraine during the few hundred years before the move to Canada. If the Soviet Union decided to export such items, the marketplace would be flooded. Hence the low market value for old-country artifacts. Fortunately, many objects that are assumed to be of old-country provenance out of surmise and foggy memories are in fact valuable items made in the first years of settlement in Canada.

The majority of Ukrainian settlers came without furniture; once here, they either bought or made it. If they had money, they could easily order furniture from the Sears and Roebuck or T. Eaton Co. catalogue. Those without money made furniture from the pine, spruce or birch on their land. Once they became more established, most of the immigrants switched to the finer factory furniture, usually relegating the original homestead pieces to the barn, summer kitchen or junk pile. Unfortunately, the number of pieces sent to the junk pile is probably much higher than the number saved. Those that survived would be rare, making them even more valuable in the marketplace.

In addition, the switch to factory furniture means that the original pioneer furniture was produced for only a short time—about ten years beginning from the first day a particular area was settled. The fact that the furniture was made for only a few years, and thus is relatively rare compared with similar furniture produced in Quebec for a period of two hundred years, further increases its value in the marketplace.

A fairly accurate account of the types of items made by the immigrants after their

arrival in Canada can be obtained by studying the furniture fabricated in Ukraine at the same time. Although there are exceptions, the new immigrants probably made items similar to the ones they had in the old country.

My research shows that most Ukrainian pioneer homes were furnished with some form of dish cupboard, a table, benches (including a sleeping bench) and a couple of trunks. There were only a few corner cupboards, chairs or chests of drawers. Probably the high degree of skill required to make these items played a part in their absence, but it is more likely that these items did not exist in great numbers in Ukraine either.

Assigning values to Ukrainian folk furniture is difficult. Unfortunately, or fortunately, each Ukrainian table, cupboard or trunk is unique. A farmer made the item for his wife from memories of the table his father had made, and so on back over generations. Only a vague price guide can be established based on this tradition.

Other factors, however, can come into play in establishing the value of such items in the marketplace. A traditional Ukrainian table has four legs and a box stretcher below; therefore, tables that are only slightly varied from this general form are more valuable than a non-traditional table with three legs and no box stretcher. A table with a high degree of personal artistic input (that is, with a sawtooth skirt, a drawer with carving, four legs and box stretcher and painted in three colours) is much more valuable than a table without any attempt at artistry.

Artistry itself must be broken down to traditional components and transitional copies. A table with traditional six-pointed pinwheels carved on the skirt is much more valuable than a table with copied Victorian floral arrangements. A table with carved people dressed in traditional Ukrainian garb is more valuable again. Painting the people after they have been carved would further increase the value. The subject is traditional, yet there is a high degree of personal effort and skill involved in carving and painting a table in this manner.

The centenary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada has also heightened interest in Ukrainian-Canadian folk furniture, pushing the prices even higher. The approach of the centenary has resulted in increased awareness by the press concerning Ukrainian society and its material culture. Press coverage has been fairly regional, mostly restricted to western Canada. Eventually, news will spread to the United States, where people are well acquainted with folk furniture, albeit of a much greater age. Prices approaching one million dollars are being paid there for such items.

The appreciation of folk ethnic form is strong and growing. Design magazines abound with illustrations of painted country furniture set in sophisticated interiors. Some painted country furniture looks much like Ukrainian-Canadian furniture. Of even greater importance than the form is the colour. In the 1960s and 1970s the demand was for natural-wood furniture; the original painted finishes were stripped. In the 1980s, a more educated marketplace wants furniture with the original painted finishes intact. Painted finishes are rarely found in the East now because most of the country furniture was stripped in the previous two decades. The largely untapped market of Ukrainian-Canadian furniture is the perfect answer to this demand for painted country furniture.

The supply of such furniture dwindles each day in the eastern United States, thus driving the prices into the hundreds of thousands of dollars for selected items. This will eventually result in the search for new sources and the subsequent discovery of Ukrainian-Canadian folk furniture by the Americans. Based on my working knowledge of the supply, I feel several hundred motivated and educated collectors from the United States could easily buy out our heritage and take it south. Fortunately, there is still time to educate the people who at present own the furniture, and most importantly, the marketplace in Canada.

There are people who do not approve of mixing commerce with the collecting of artifacts. They feel that artifacts should be in museums not private collections. Although I sympathize with these sentiments, the reality is that too many significant pieces were made for the existing museums to house, let alone show, and museum-quality pieces constitute a fraction of the objects actually crafted by the original Ukrainian settlers. The cost in time and money to locate these top-quality items is at the moment far beyond the budgets of most institutions. For instance, over the last nine years I have located more than 5000 Ukrainian items. Of these, a hundred would qualify as great or significant finds. My wages and expenses alone amount to about $3700 for each of the 5000.

How then can we hope to locate and save our Ukrainian material heritage? One way is to search for these items using the marketplace as

Fig. 1

A good example of a great or significant find, this wardrobe has three-colour paint, a scalloped pediment and base, high foot, single raised panel door, incised lines and moulded facing. These, however, are not nearly so rare as the finger-painted designs on the door. (Photograph courtesy of the author)

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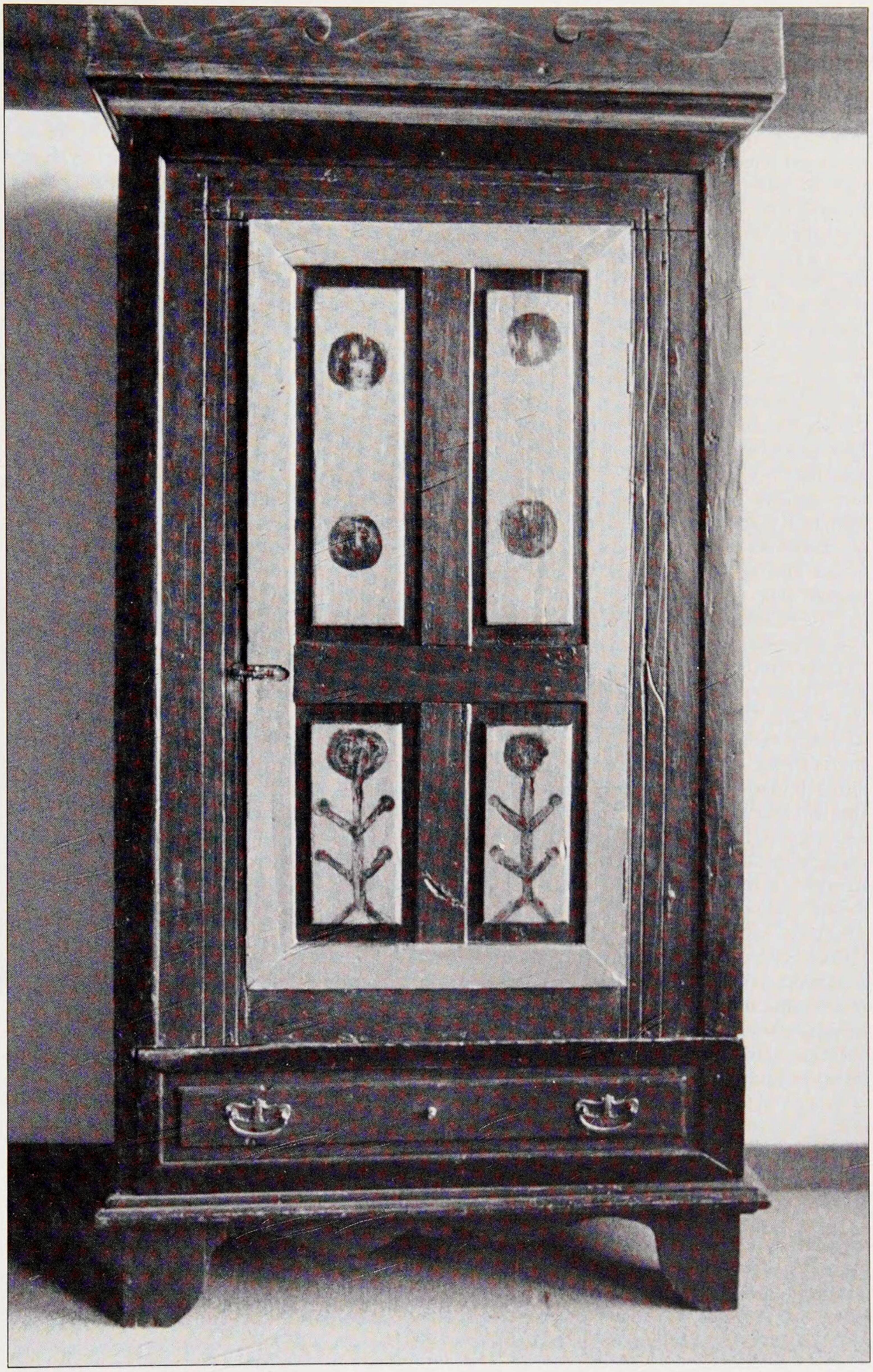


a tool. Another way is what I term the "passive" search; it is only feasible when time is not pressing.

The passive search has been going on now for two decades and has accounted for the majority of the Ukrainian ethnic items in Canadian museums. The actual principle of the passive search is simple. A great piece filters through the marketplace to someone who recognizes its value. Typically a piece shows up at a farm auction. A local farmer purchases the item for a few dollars, thinking he can sell it for a few dollars more to someone with connections to interested museum buyers. For years the Ukrainian artifacts showing up in the marketplace were found this way. The beauty of the passive search is the negligible cost of the search and the low price paid for the items. Low prices mean resale is that much easier. Everyone is happy. Several collections in eastern Canada became substantial this way. Eastern Canada was the eventual resting place of almost all the western Ukrainian artifacts found during the heydays of the passive search, 1960-80.

The problem with the passive search was that very few involved became educated about the true worth of Ukrainian folk furniture. The main dealers near the top of the pyramid, based in eastern Canada, were not interested in raising awareness because the price of each item turning up passively was extremely sensitive to increased buying pressure. They kept the grassroots-level suppliers in the dark regarding the true value of the items, encouraging them to pay as little as possible. Unfortunately, a farmer attending a farm sale and seeing a table like the one his father made sell for a couple of dollars is more inclined to burn it than put it up for sell. Through ignorance or negligence, these key players were probably responsible for a great many Ukrainian items being destroyed. They did save a good number of pieces using the passive-search method, but failed to understand an important rule of the marketplace: cheap is relative. Failing to educate both the supply and demand side of the marketplace as to the value of items means one may be able to buy cheap but then one must sell cheap.

Conversely, if an effort is made to educate the marketplace, an expensive item can be sold for even more. In addition, when the farmer attends an auction and sees a table sell for a few hundred dollars, he will certainly not destroy his table until he gets a second opinion on its value. As a result, the number of artifacts destroyed decreases. Time, unfortunately, is running out for our Ukrainian-Canadian folk furniture. It is imperative to save the best of our Ukrainian material heritage from going to American markets.

To sum up, every effort must be made over the next few years to uncover the best Ukrainian-Canadian furniture. Anyone in a position to create a market or help a market develop (whether it be directly by buying items or indirectly by publishing information about this folk form) must do it. The rest of us must, at the very least, take a camera on our next visit to the relatives on the farm and document any items that might be examples of pioneer handmade furniture. Dealers in folk furniture should educate their collectors about the value and importance of Ukrainian-Canadian furniture. Let the marketplace soak up the commercial items; satisfy the America demand by sending as many truckloads of mediocre furniture southwards as possible. Above all though, keep our museum-quality items here.

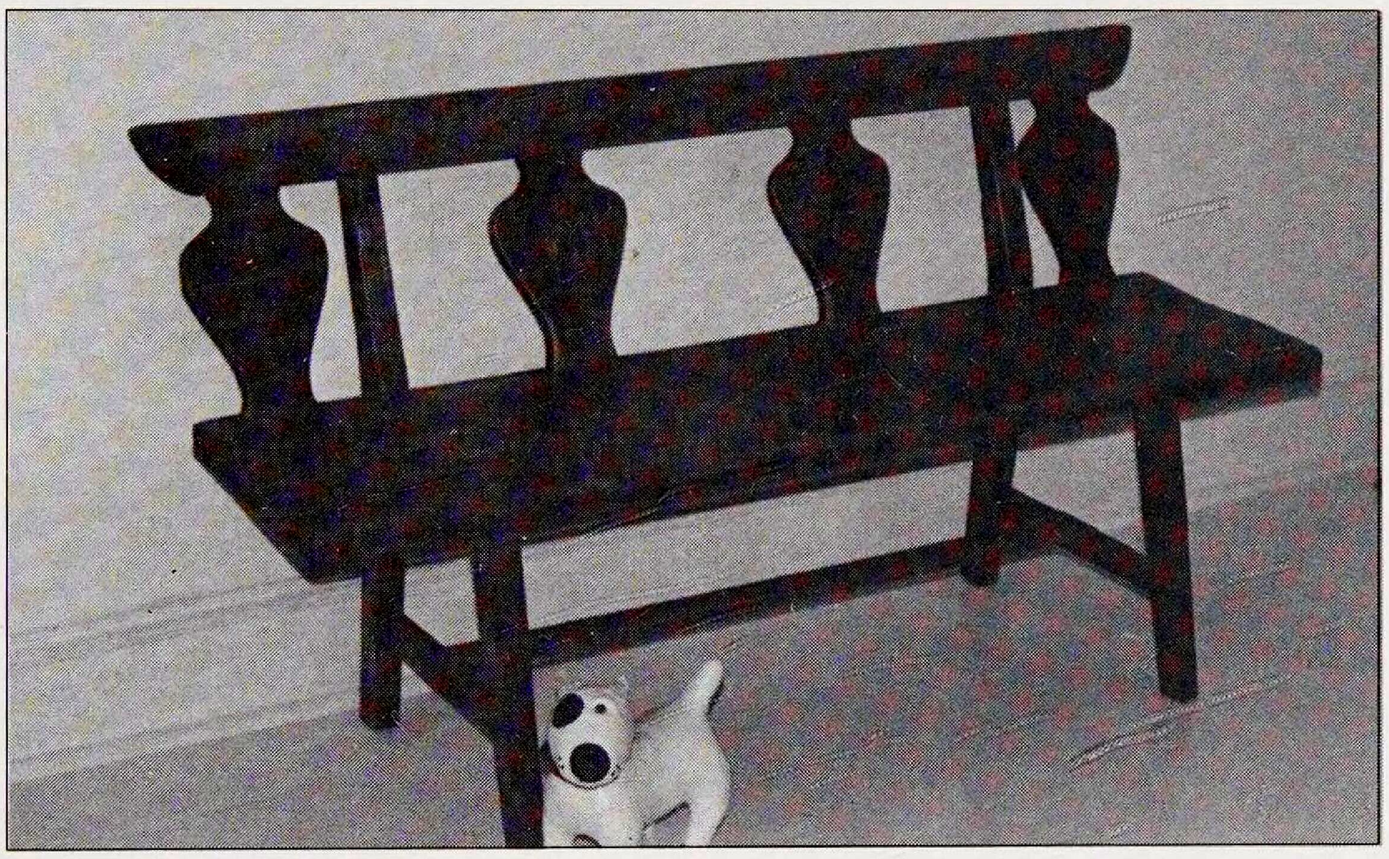
Everyone will benefit if we understand the marketplace for what it is, a tool to use. Used properly, it will help us save the best of the Ukrainian-Canadian folk furniture for future collectors, museums and the Canadian public. Improperly used, it will make a few elite collectors and dealers wealthy. Ignored, it will turn the hundreth anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada into a dinner bell for our antique-hungry neighbour to the south.

Ukrainian Antiques?

MICHAEL ROWAN

In the late 1970s it had become apparent in Canada that the supply of antiques was diminishing. Certain items that were readily available in the 1960s and 1970s had disappeared. More-commercial items such as dry-sinks, flatback cupboards and six-foot tables became difficult to obtain. For this reason a number of antique dealers and collectors (especially those interested in East European folk art made in Canada) turned their attention towards western Canada to the handcrafted furniture and accessories of such ethnic groups as the Ukrainians. Of course these artifacts are not classed as antiques since they are not a hundred years old. However, dealers in eastern Canada decided to overlook the wire and nail construction, a telltale sign of furniture made within the last hundred years. Frankly they had no choice. As long as the furniture was made of pine and had the country look, as opposed to the factory design of ash and oak furniture from the early twentieth century, it was marketable.

Fig. 1
Ukrainian sitting bench, pine, Yorkton, Sask., c. 1900, 13.7 m wide. Note the H–stretcher, traditional colour combination (orange and blue) and two extra vase–shaped splatts for added support of the upper horizontal rail. (Photograph courtesy of the author)



There are two distinctive groups interested in acquiring Ukrainian artifacts: dealers who purchase the furniture and refinish it so that it resembles eastern pine furniture; and folk-art collectors who are not concerned with the age, the wood used or the construction, but with the surface treatment including the occasional carving. The main interest is, of course, the bold use of colour. The furniture forms are quite often unusual and the construction is crude, but the use of colour is sensational. Bright, often primary, colours are arranged in combinations of red and green, orange and green, and blue and red. These combinations are most often found on cupboards, tables, sleeping benches and wall benches. It is this use of colour that folk-art collectors prize most highly.

When I first began to sell Ukrainian folk art in the mid-1970s, few people were interested. Most Canadian collectors did not feel that the Ukrainian artifacts would improve or enhance their collections. There are those who would not concern themselves with any items made after 1860, labelling these pieces as "late." Today, however, there is a growing number of collectors who are knowledgeable about the society that produced these artifacts. They appreciate the form, function and decorative surface treatment. Many are concerned with the well-being and the survival of this art form. Indeed a number of collectors present Ukrainian folk art as the pivotal expression of their collection.

Icons: Theology in Colour

SISTER ANGELICA S.S.M.I. (HODOWANSKY)

The word *icon* is of Greek origin and means "image." The theology of icons is based on the Eastern Christian belief that Jesus Christ, the perfect image of the Father, is the image according to which man (male and female) was created (Genesis 1: 26). Created in God's image, man is called to grow in his likeness so that eventually in eternity he can share, as the Body of Christ, life with the Father, Son and Spirit in the Trinity. Icons are a call to become or grow into the perfect image Jesus Christ.

Iconography can be traced through legend or tradition to the beginnings of Christianity. The earliest icon of the Theotokos (Mother of God) is said to date back to Luke the Evangelist. The earliest-known icon of Christ, the God-Man, "Archeiropoietos," is from fifth-century Edessa. This icon, "made without hands," was

known in the West as the "Holy Face" and sometimes as "Veronica's Veil." Legend attributes this icon to an image of Christ's face imprinted by Christ himself on a cloth and sent to Abgar, King of Edessa, to cure him of an illness.[1]

Icons serve many purposes: they speak to Ukrainian Christians of rootedness and human dignity; they call to become like Christ, evoke a presence, and thus are a focus of prayer; they are a source of healing, blessing, life.

A basic doctrine of the Eastern Church regarding humanity is man's creation in God's image (whence he was to grow into his likeness); his fall (through sin) into a distorted image; and his re-creation into a new image with the coming of Christ. A number of icons remind Eastern Christians of their great dignity as sons of God and of their call to grow in Christ-likeness. This call, given at creation and repeated anew at re-creation, is an invitation to enter into a relationship with all humanity and with the cosmos, and in this communion, to enter into the life of the Trinity.

One such icon that speaks powerfully of this new life in Christ is the resurrection icon. To understand this icon one needs to remember the liturgical refrain repeated so often during the Easter season: "Christ is risen from the dead; by his death he conquered death, and to those in the graves he granted life." In the icon, Christ stands over the broken gates of Hades. The gates are in the form of the cross, broken. Death has no power, for the demons are now relegated to the darkness–but Christ has touched that darkness too, that core of the fallen world. From there he has brought into life all the just, the human race beginning with Adam and Eve through to the prophets, kings and patriarchs who await the promised coming of the Messiah. He extends his hand to raise into resurrected life the human race. Death is conquered. He who is life extends life to Adam and Eve, and they once again are able to reach out and accept it. Once again life has been given to the human race, new glorious life, and been accepted. Man is empowered to reach out, accept, become alive with eternal promise. Death holds no fear. Life is the eternal gift.

Every icon evokes a presence and thus becomes a focus of prayer. The eyes of an icon beckon to the beyond. They are an invitation to enter the invisible world beyond death, the world where life in its fullness is lived beyond time and space, beyond pain and suffering, beyond limitations of any kind. Any icon of Our Lady of Tenderness can serve as an example of how to use an icon for prayer. It is the eyes that invite the prayer to communicate with this gentle mother. As a person, looking at a photograph of his or her beloved mother, living or dead, experiences the intimate presence of that mother, more so is the presence felt with an icon. She who is mother of all, concerned for her children, is truly present to them as they turn to her icon. Her eyes look at the prayer, they see the heart, understand the pain, share the joy, await the plea. These are the eyes of a mother who has watched her son grow to manhood, give life daily to his people, be cruelly humiliated and painfully put to death. They are eyes that have danced at his resurrection. This mother looks out at the prayer and says, "Come, speak, I understand, I

▲
Fig. 1
An icon depicting the miracle-working Our Lady of Victory, painted by Father J. Mokrycky, 1983–84. It resides in St. Basil's Ukrainian Catholic Church, Regina, Sask. (Courtesy of the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood of Canada, St. Basil's Branch, Regina, Sask.)

love you, I am Mother. I am your mother, and mother of your Saviour." As mother of this Saviour she seems also to be looking inward, remembering all her son has done for the world, marvelling at the continual wonder of the Trinity herself, the world and the prayer before her. Not only does the mother beckon and invite, but she gently holds out her son; she points to him as the Way, the Truth and the Life; she gives him to the world. It is Jesus who clings to his mother (and thus teaches us to cling to her), but she does not cling to him; rather she offers him. "He is the salvation you are looking for. Come to him, receive him, become one with him." The mother invites us to follow her son, be his disciple as she was, and as such, be like her—life-giver, Christ-giver to the naked, the hungry, the weary. As she is tender, compassionate and forgiving, she invites the prayer to gentleness, open-heartedness and care.

Icons are also theological statements in colour and line. The mother is frequently covered from head to toe with a magenta robe. She who was human (signified by the blue dress) is covered with a robe of divinity (magenta), or queenship; the veil, a symbol of an Eastern woman's humility, is the sign of the presence of the Holy Spirit. As the Holy Spirit covered and filled the Mother of God with his light, with himself, she became completely transformed; she became higher than the cherubim; she became the first and most glorious creature to fulfill God's plan for womanhood/manhood. Furthermore, on her robe shine three stars; these are symbolic of the Eastern belief, so often praised in liturgic song, in the threefold virginity of this mother: before the birth of her son, during his birth and after his birth. The virginity of the mother is a gift of the Trinity, and as such, these stars speak of the relationship of this woman to the Father: all her thoughts and obedience are his (star on forehead); to the Spirit: all her love and being are his (star on shoulder); to the Son: her life is totally his (star on shoulder where he rests). This woman speaks softly of the way to listen, to empty self and to allow love to fill. The shoulder fringes and the gold or bright lines around her face tell of her holiness, her divinization, her participation in eternal splendour and glory: her life in God. Beauty of face is her predominant feature. It attracts us to her and opens our hearts to receive, be touched, be filled, be.

For Ukrainians the icon is not a decoration nor a sign of ethnicity, but rather, a presence issuing a call to become our real selves, persons, to enter into a relationship of love with all creation and with the Creator.

Notes

1. Leonid Ouspensky and Vladimir Lossky, *The Meaning of Icons* (Cresswood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1983), p. 69.

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Collaborateurs

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Articles: Ruth Holmes Whitehead, "Christina Morris: Micmac Artist and Artist's Model"; David Newlands, "A Catalogue of Spring Moulds from Two Huron County, Ontario, Earthenware Potteries"; Charles Foss, "John Warren Moore: Cabinetmaker, 1812–1893"; Marie Elwood, "The State Dinner Service of Canada, 1898."

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Articles: Hilary Russell, "'Canadian Ways': An Introduction to Comparative Studies of Housework, Stoves, and Diet in Great Britain and Canada"; Ian Radforth, "In the Bush: The Changing World of Work in Ontario's Pulpwood Logging Industry during the Twentieth Century"; W. John McIntyre, "From Workshop to Factory: The Furnituremaker"; Marilyn J. Barber, "Below Stairs: The Domestic Servant."

Research Reports / Rapports de recherche: Sandra Morton, "Inventory of Secondary Manufacturing Companies in Alberta, 1880–1914"; Nancy-Lou Patterson, "Waterloo Region Gardens in the Germanic Tradition"; H.T. Holman, "Some Comments on the Use of Chattel Mortgages in Material History Research."

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Articles: Jocelyne Mathieu, «Le mobilier contenant : Traitement comparatif Perche–Québec, d'après des inventaires de biens après décès des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles»; Alison Prentice, "From Household to School House: The Emergence of the Teacher as Servant of the State."

Research Reports / Rapports de recherche: Frances Roback, "Advertising Canadian Pianos and Organs, 1850–1914"; Luce Vermette, «L'habillement traditionnel au début du XIXe siècle»; Eileen Marcil, «La rôle de la tonnellerie dans la réglementation de la pêche au début du XIXe siècle»; Anita Rush, "Directory of Canadian Manufacturers, Bicycle Industry, 1880–1984"; David Neufeld, "Dealing with an Industrial Monument: The Borden Bridge"; Claudia Haagen and Debra McNabb, "The Use of Primary Documents as Computerized Collection Records for the Study of Material Culture."

Notes and Comments / Notes et commentaires: Gregg Finley, "Material History and Museums: A Curatorial Perspective"; Hilary Russell, "Reflections of an Image Finder: Some Problems and Suggestions for Picture Researchers"; Papers Completed in North American Decorative Arts Graduate Course, University of Toronto, 1968–82.

Forum/Colloque: Robert D. Turner, "The Limitations of Material History: A Museological Perspective"; Peter E. Rider, "The Concrete Clio: Definition of a Field of History."

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Greg Baeker, Introduction.

Articles: Thomas J. Schlereth, "The Material Culture of Childhood: Problems and Potential in Historical Explanation"; Felicity Nowell-Smith, "Feeding the Nineteenth-Century Baby: Implications for Museum Collections"; Christina Bates, "'Beauty Unadorned': Dressing Children in Late Nineteenth-Century Ontario"; Hilary Russell, "Training, Restraining, and Sustaining: Infant and Child Care in the Late Nineteenth Century"; Janet Holmes, "Economic Choices and Popular Toys"; Mary Tivy, "Nineteenth-Century Canadian Children's Games."

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Articles: Ernst W. Stieb, "A Professional Keeping Shop: The Nineteenth-Century Apothecary"; W. John McIntyre, "Diffusion and Vision: A Case Study of the Ebenezer Doan House in Sharon, Ontario"; Bruce Curtis, "The Playground in Nineteenth-Century Ontario: Theory and Practice."

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Research Note / Note de recherche: Serge Rouleau, «1986 : Cent ans d'exploitation de la cale sèche Lorne, à Lauzon.»

Forum/Colloque: D.R. Richeson, "An Approach to Historical Research in Museums"; Barbara Riley, "Research and the Development of a Domestic History Collection."

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Gerald L. Pocius, Introduction.

Articles: David J. Goa, "Dying and Rising in the Kingdom of God: The Ritual Incarnation of the 'Ultimate' in Eastern Christian Culture"; Roger Hall and Bruce Bowden, "Beautifying the Boneyard: The Changing Image of the Cemetery in Nineteenth-Century Ontario"; Gerald L. Pocius, "The Transformation of the Traditional Newfoundland Cemetery: Institutionalizing the Secular Dead."

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Research Note / Note de recherche: Valerie Evans, "In Mourning."

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Books received/Ouvrages reçus.

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Article: Joyce Taylor Dawson, "An Analysis of Liturgical Textiles at Sainte-Marie among the Hurons."

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Articles: Elizabeth W. McGahan, "Inside the Hallowed Walls: Convent Life through Material History"; Colin M. Coates, "Monuments and Memories: The Evolution of British Columbian Cemeteries, 1850–1950"; Ann Gorman Condon, "Loyalist Style

and the Culture of the Atlantic Seaboard."

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Research Notes / Notes de recherche: Elizabeth Bloomfield and Gerald Bloomfield, "Mills, Factories and Craftshops of Ontario, 1870: A Machine-Readable Source for Material Historians."

Notes and Comments / Notes et commentaires: Gregg Finley, Federation of Nova Scotian Heritage Conference "Rum by Gum"; "Wallpaper in Canada, 1600s–1900s."

Reviews / Comptes rendus: Glenbow Museum, "Metis," by Jean Friesen; "Environment Canada, Parks, Batoche National Historic Park, Phase I," by W.A. Waiser; Royal Ontario Museum, "Canada's Handwoven Heritage," by Susan Burke; Vancouver Museum, "Captain George Vancouver: A Voyage of Discovery," by Douglas Cole; Robert C. Wheeler, *A Toast to the Fur Trade: A Picture Essay on Its Material Culture*, by Jean Morrison; P.A. Buckner (ed.), *Teaching Maritime Studies*, by Mary Ellen Herbert.

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Results of Bulletin Surveys / Résumé des sondages

Articles: Robert B. Klymasz, "Crucial Trends in Modern Ukrainian Embroidery"; Jacques Mathieu avec la participation de Georges–Pierre Léonidoff et John R. Porter, «L'objet et ses contextes»; Ronald W. Hawker, "Monuments in the Nineteenth-Century Public Cemeteries of Victoria, British Columbia."

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Articles: John Summers, "Beyond Brown Bread and Oatmeal Cookies: New Directions for Historic Kitchens"; Richard MacKinnon, "Carriage Making in St. John's, Newfoundland: A Folkloristic Perspective on a Historical Industry"; John B. Collins, " 'Design in Industry' Exhibition, National Gallery of Canada, 1946: Turning Bombers into Lounge Chairs."

Research Reports / Rapports de recherche: Joyce Taylor Dawson, "In Search of Early Canadian Embroidery Abroad."

Research Notes / Notes de recherche: A.J.B. Johnston, "History Painting: The Creation of Interpretive Tableaux"; Robert S. Elliot, "The *Flight* to Marseille"; Jean–Roch Cyr, «Aspects de l'agriculture chez les francophones du Nouveau–Brunswick au XIXe siècle : le rencensement de 1861.»

Forum / Colloque: Mary Tivy, "The Quality of Research Is Strained: Collections Research in Ontario Community Museums."

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Reviews / Comptes rendus: Karl A. Peter, *The Dynamics of Hutterite Society: An Analytical Approach*, by Robert B. Klymasz; Provincial Museum of Alberta, "Seasons of Celebration: Ritual in Eastern Christian Culture," by Robert B. Klymasz; Gail Helgason, *The First Albertans: An Archaeological Search*, by Richard E. Morlan; Simon J. Bronner, *Grasping Things: Folk Material Culture and Mass Society in America*, by Brenda Orr; Harry E. Cullis and David T. Suzuki, *British Columbia: Frontier for Ideas*, by Jim Wardrop.

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Articles: Suzanne Marchand, «L'impact des innovations technologiques sur la vie quotidienne des Québécoise du début du XXe siècle (1910-1940)»; M.A. MacDonald, "Before the Loyalists: The Material Culture of New Brunswick's Early English Settlers"; Felicity L. Leung, "Japanese Wallpaper in Canada, 1880s–1930s."

Research Reports / Rapports de recherche: Diane Tye, "Decorative Cast-Iron Fences in St. John's, Newfoundland"; Peter Latta, "Eighteenth-Century Immigrants to Nova Scotia: The Yorkshire Settlers"

Photo-essay / Essai photographique: Harry Foster, "Canada's New National Museums."

Conference Reports / Rapports de conférences: André Bérubé, «Un aspect méconnu de l'Autriche : son passé industriel»; Robert S. Elliot, "VI International Congress of Maritime Museums"; Peter Latta, "Science and Society in the Maritimes."

Reviews / Comptes rendus: James A. Slater, *The Colonial Burying Grounds of Eastern Connecticut and the Men Who Made Them*; Barbara R. Robertson, *Sawpower: Making Lumber in the Sawmills of Nova Scotia*; Debra McNabb, *Old Sydney Town: Historic Buildings of the North End*; Alaric and Gretchen Faulkner, *The French at Pentagoet 1635–1674*; Thomas B. King, *Glass in Canada*; Kenneth M. Molson, *Canada's National Aviation Museum: Its History and Collections;* Francess G. Halpenny, ed., *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. VI, *1821 to 1835.*

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Articles: John C. Lehr, "The Ukrainian Sacred Landscape: A Metaphor of Survival and Acculturation"; David J. Goa, "Three Urban Parishes: A Study

of Sacred Space"; Stella Hryniuk, "A Heritage Lost: The Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Portage la Prairie, Manitoba, 1927–1983"; Peter Melnycky, "Draught Horses and Harnesses among Early Ukrainian Settlers in East-Central Alberta"; Radomir B. Bilash, "Ukrainian Peel Ovens in Western Canada."

Research Reports/Rapports de recherche: A.M. Kostecki, "Crosses of East Slavic Christianity among Ukrainians in Western Canada"; Michael Ewanchuk, "Settling in: Tools and Farming Techniques of the Early Ukrainian Pioneers"; Diana Thomas, "Documenting Ukrainian-Canadian Grave Markers in Alberta"; Bodhan Medwidsky, "Ukrainian Grave Markers in East-Central Alberta"; Enrico Carlson-Cumbo, "Contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian Grave Markers in Urban Southern Ontario"; Brad Loewen, "A Ukrainian Church Exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Civilization"; Roman Fodchuk, "Building the Little House on the Prairies: Ukrainian Technology, Canadian Resources."

Research Notes / Notes de recherche: Andrea K. Klymasz, "Ukrainian Folk Medicine in Canada."

Exhibitions and Collections / Expositions et collections: Olya S. Marko, "'A Woman's Work': Curator's Report"; Vera A. Nokony, "The Ukrainian Museum of Canada."

Viewpoints/Points de vue: Jim Shockey, "Ukrainian-Canadian Folk Furniture and the Marketplace"; Michael Rowan, "Ukrainian Antiques?"; Sister Angelica S.S.M.I. (Hodowansky), "Icons: Theology in Colour."

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